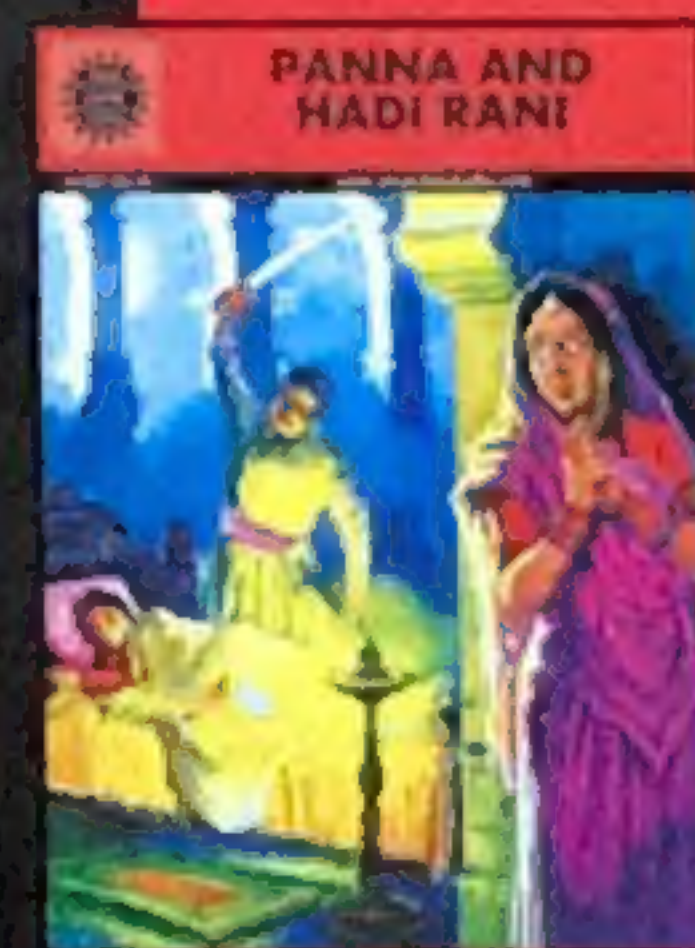
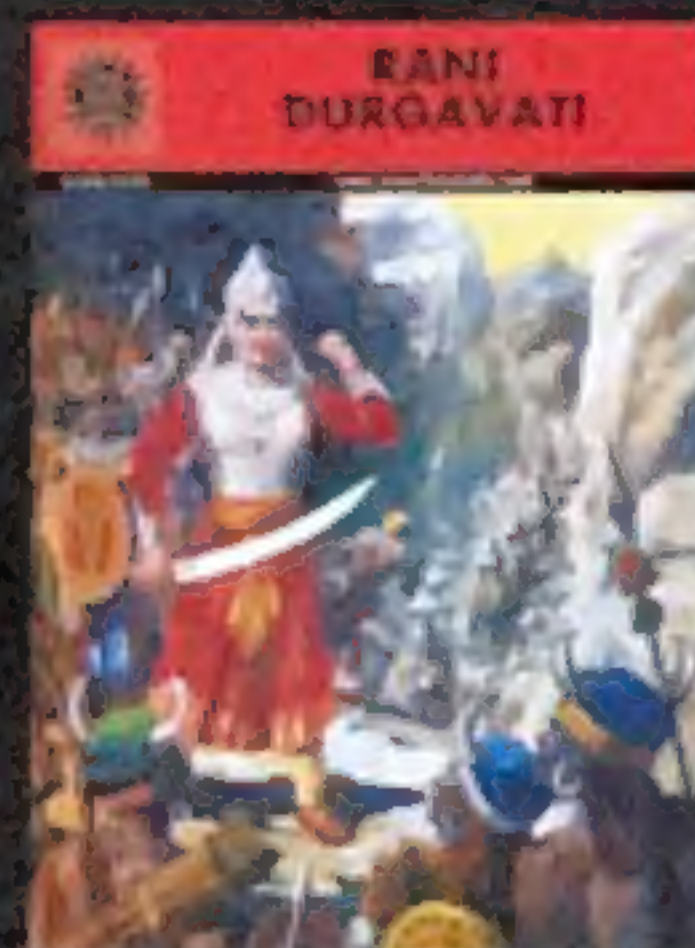


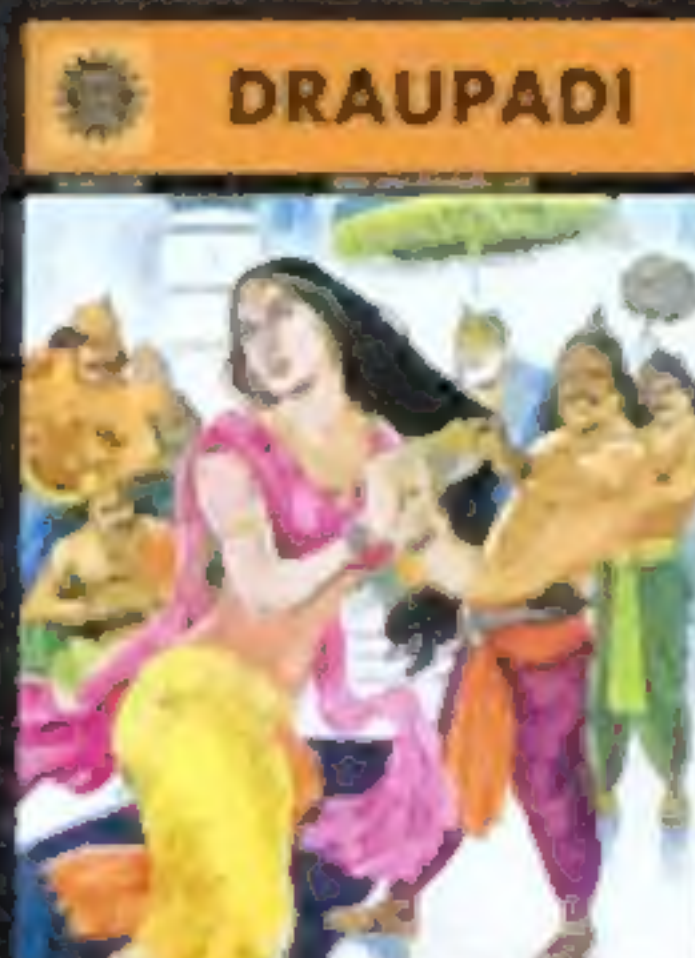
## ROOPMATI

The story of Roopmati, the princess of Dharampuri, and Baz Bahadur, the Sultan of Mandu, is one of India's greatest love stories. From the day of her fateful meeting with the sultan, the princess loved no one else, sacrificing all just to be one with him. Defying every norm she married him. But their happiness was short lived. The Mughal Emperor Akbar wanted Mandu and commanded his general, Adham Khan to march on it.

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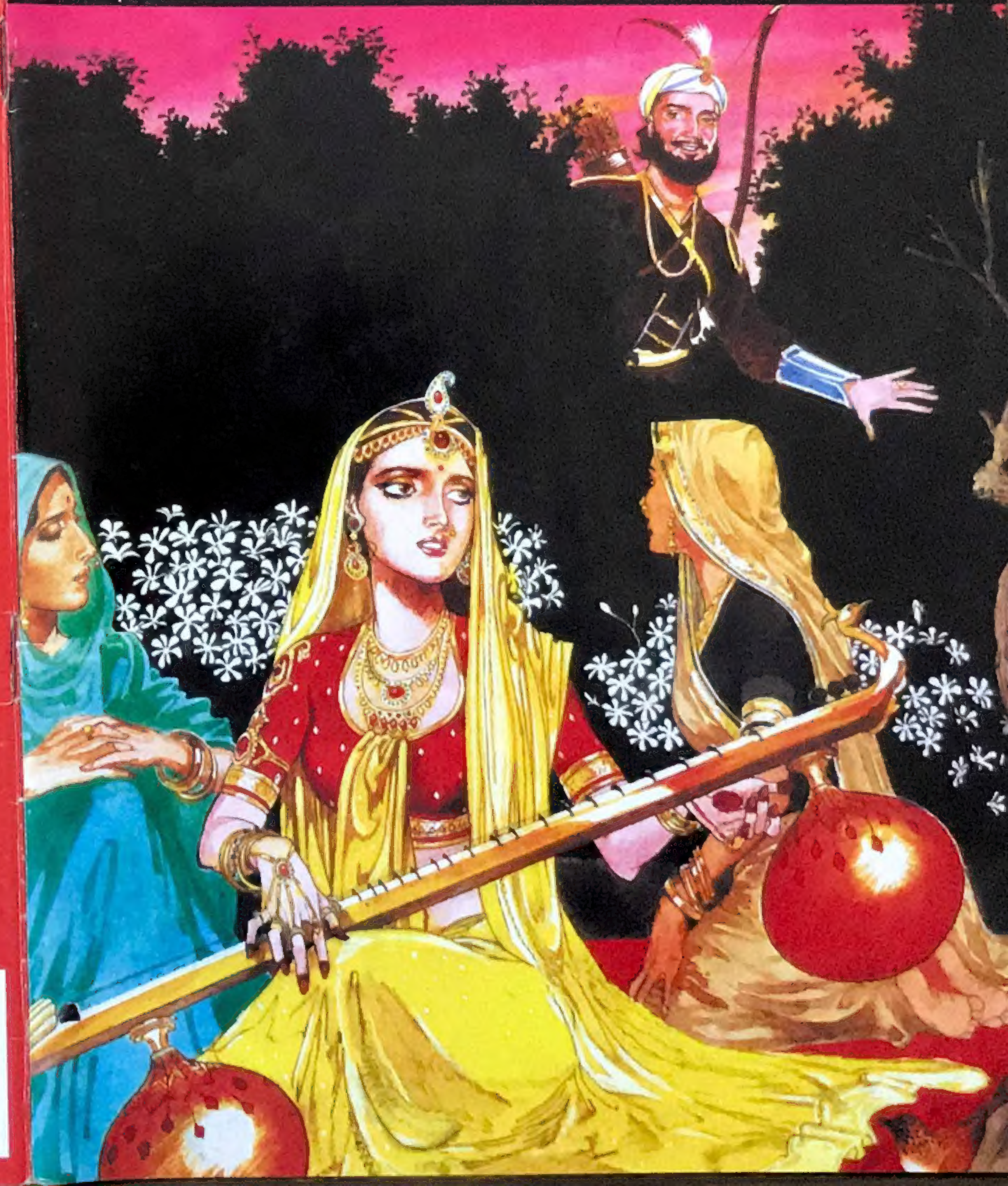
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# ROOPMATI

THE TRAGIC STORY OF A RAJPUT PRINCESS

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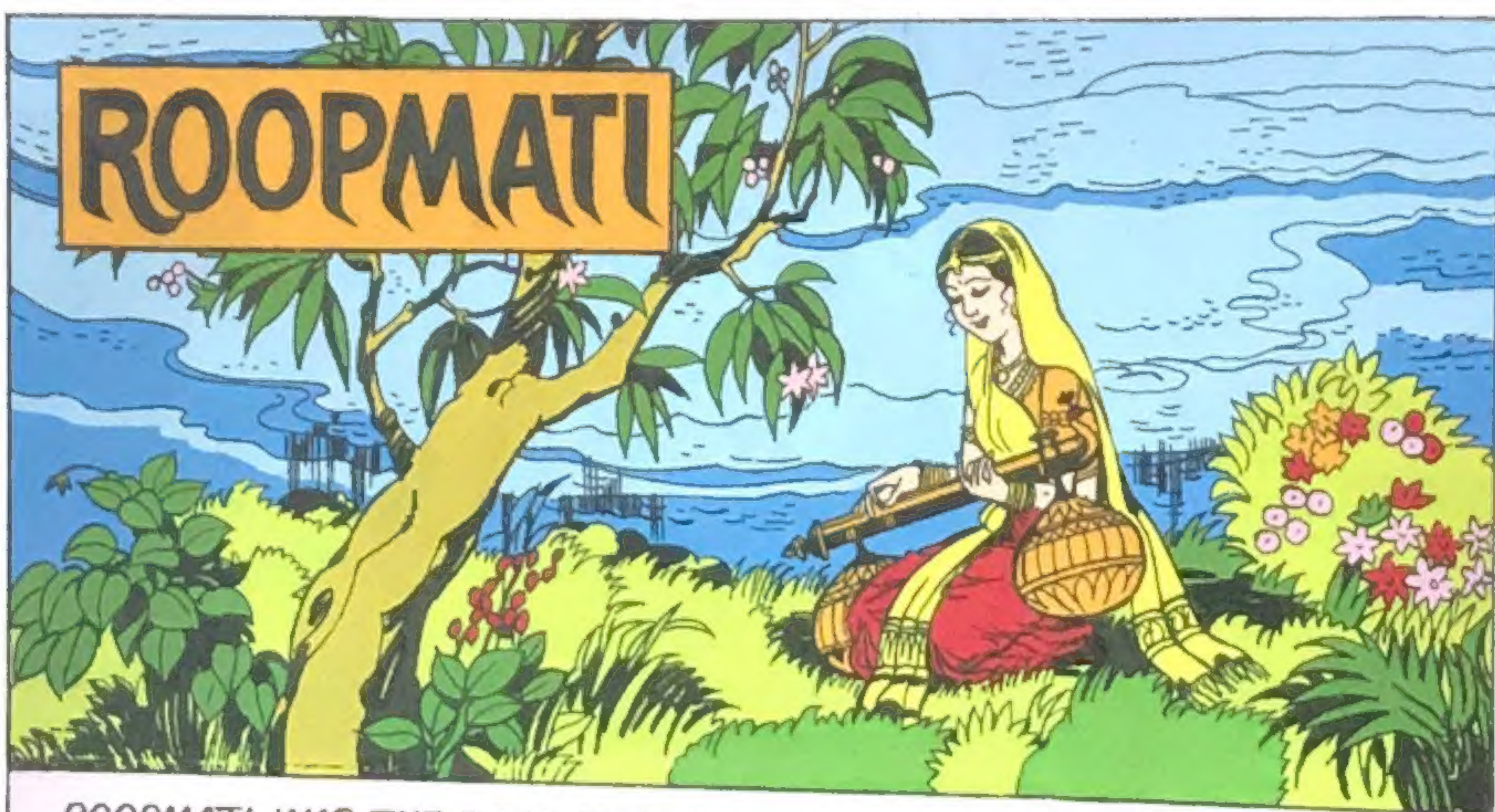
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# ROOPMATI

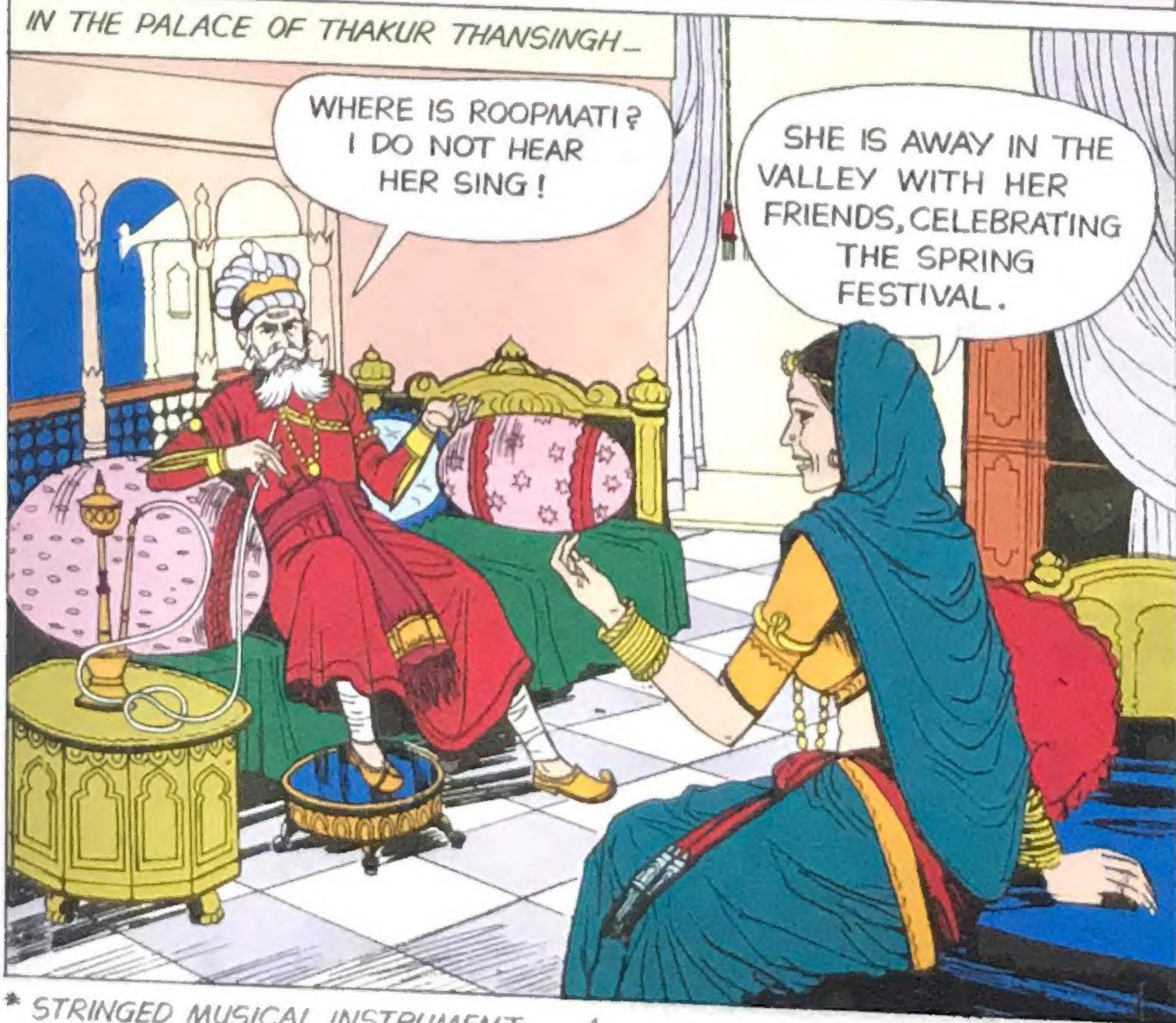


ROOPMATI WAS THE DAUGHTER OF A RATHOR RAJPUT, THAKUR THANSINGH OF DHARAMPURI. SHE EXCELLED IN SINGING AND PLAYING THE BEEN.\* BORN AND BROUGHT UP ON THE BANKS OF THE RIVER REWA, IT IS SAID THAT THE MUSIC OF ITS WATERS PASSED INTO HER VERY SOUL.

IN THE PALACE OF THAKUR THANSINGH...

WHERE IS ROOPMATI?  
I DO NOT HEAR  
HER SING!

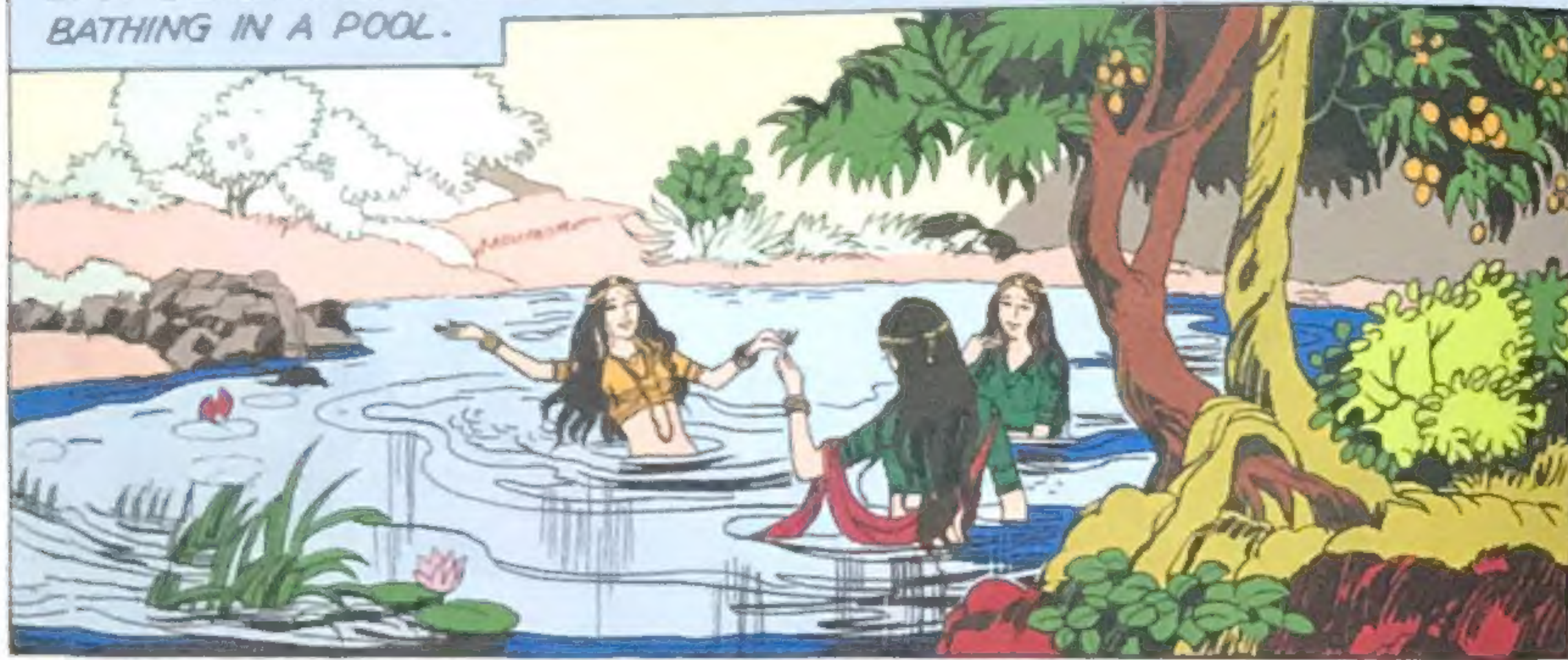
SHE IS AWAY IN THE  
VALLEY WITH HER  
FRIENDS, CELEBRATING  
THE SPRING  
FESTIVAL.



\* STRINGED MUSICAL INSTRUMENT



IN A BEAUTIFUL FOREST NEARBY, ROOPMATI AND HER FRIENDS WERE BATHING IN A POOL.



HAVING BATHED —



ALL OF THEM SAT BENEATH THE THICK SHADE OF A BANYAN TREE AND LISTENED TO ROOPMATI'S SONG.



ON THAT VERY DAY, BAZ BAHADUR, THE SULTAN OF MANDU, ALONG WITH A GALLANT ARRAY, HAD SET OUT TO HUNT.



ON SIGHTING A DEER, BAZ BAHADUR AIMED HIS ARROW AT THE ANIMAL.



THE DEER MADE A DASH INTO THE HEAVY FOLIAGE OF THE FOREST.



THE DEER RAN FARTHER INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE FOREST, PURSUED BY BAZ BAHADUR AND HIS MEN.







THE ANIMAL HAS FLED LIKE THE WIND! SCATTER ABOUT, MEN, AND SEE IF YOU CAN GET YOUR HANDS ON IT. THREE OF YOU COME ALONG WITH ME.



BUT THE ANIMAL MANAGED TO EVADE THEM.

WE HAVE LOST TRACK OF THE DEER. LET US RETURN.



ALL OF A SUDDEN, THROUGH THE FOREST STILLNESS—

HUSH! DO I HEAR SOMEONE SING? WHAT A FINE VOICE!

IT COMES FROM THAT DIRECTION.

BAZ BAHADUR AND HIS MEN FOLLOWED THE VOICE AND REACHED THE PLACE WHERE ROOPMATI WAS SINGING, ABSORBED IN HER SONG, UNAWARE OF SPYING STRANGERS.



SHE IS EXCELLENT!

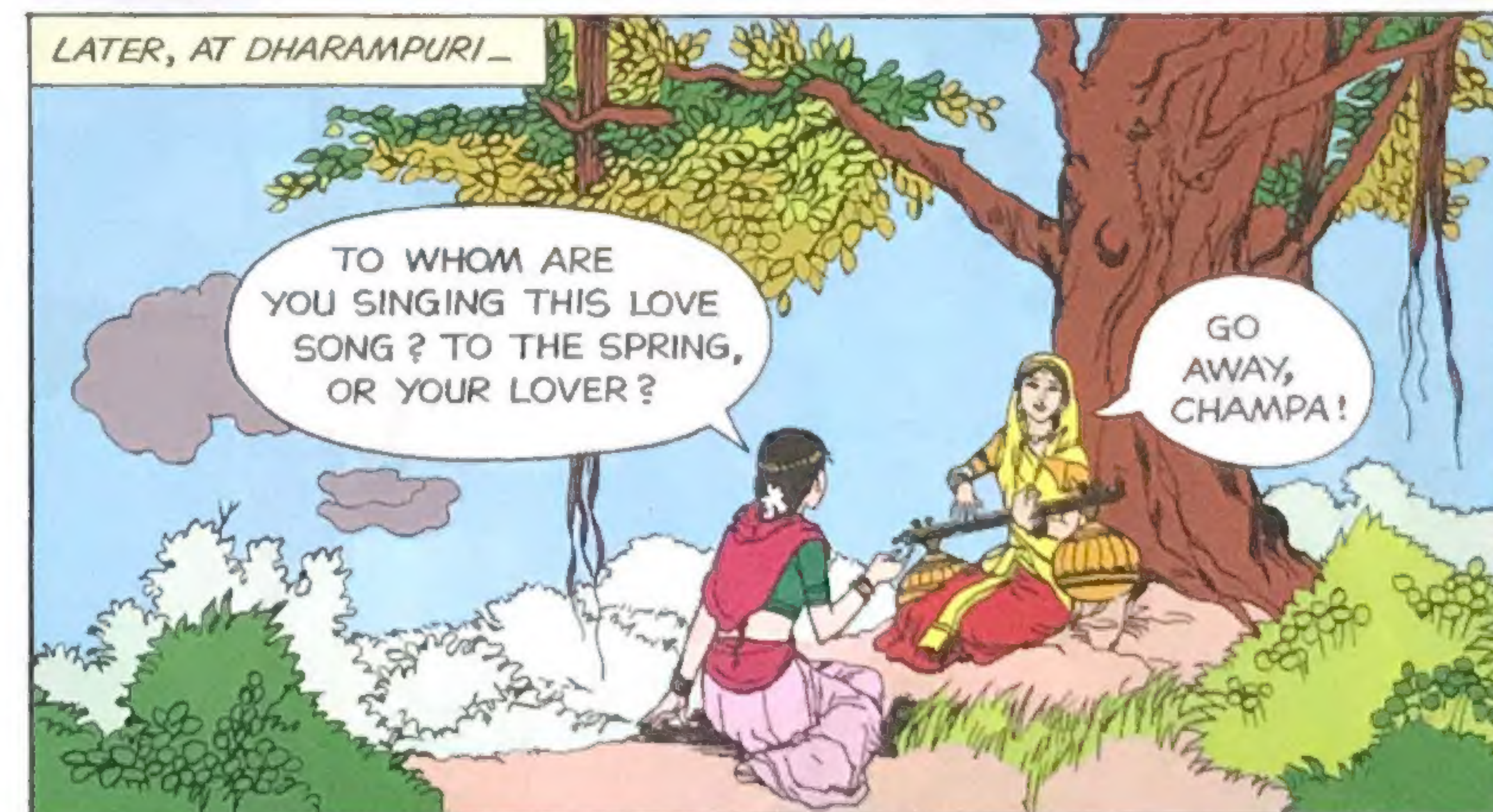
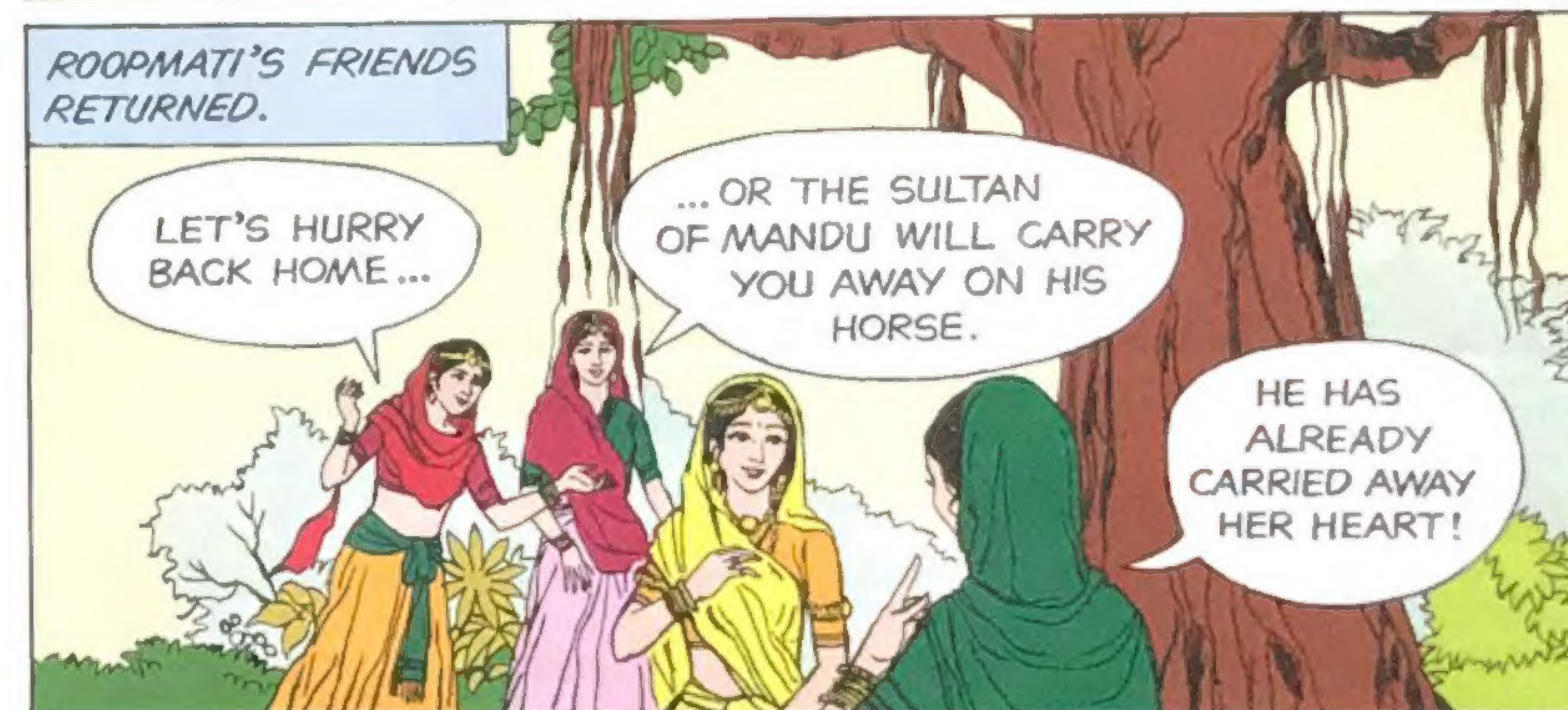
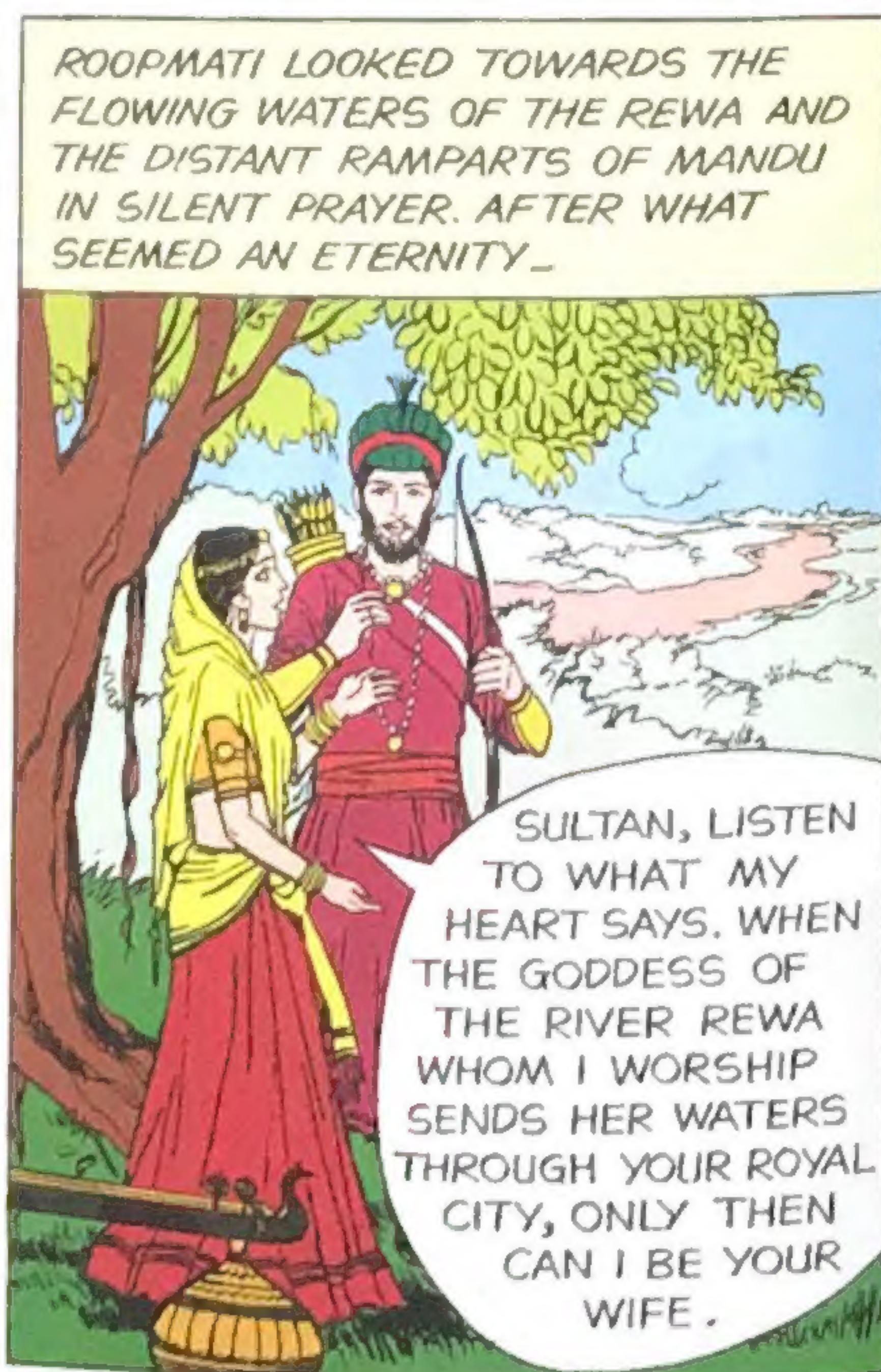
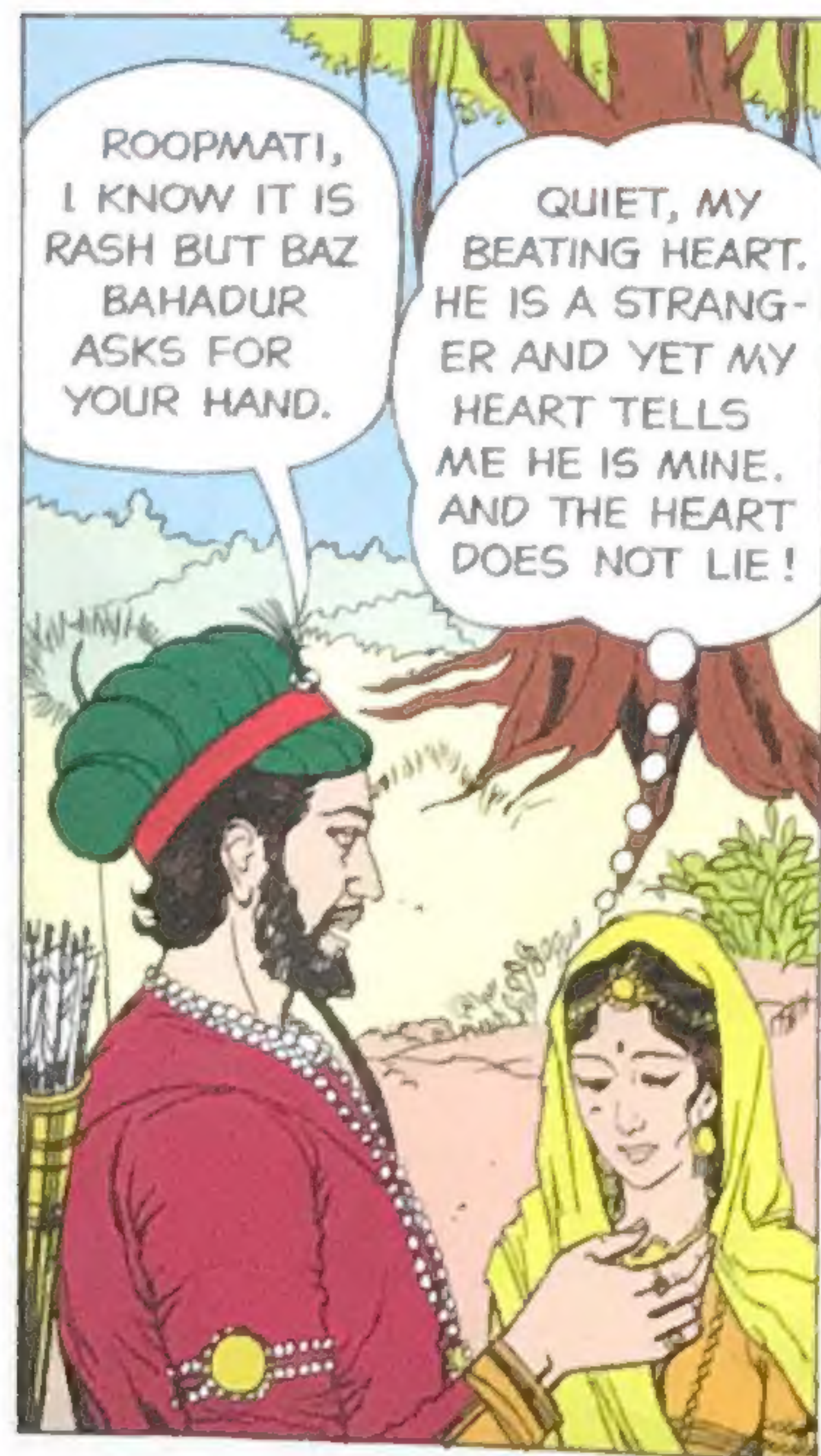
WHAT CHARM! AND BEAUTY! AND A FINE SINGER TOO! SUCH DEFT FINGERS ON THE BEEN! WHO COULD SHE BE?

THE SONG OVER, BAZ BAHADUR STEPPED OUT OF HIS HIDING PLACE AND FACED ROOPMATI. AT THE APPEARANCE OF THIS SUDDEN INTRUDER, HER FRIENDS SCATTERED IN FEAR, BUT ROOPMATI STOOD HER GROUND, UNAFRAID. BAZ BAHADUR ADDRESSED HER—



LADY, I AM A LOVER OF MUSIC. I AM AT A LOSS FOR WORDS TO PRAISE YOUR VOICE AND YOU!



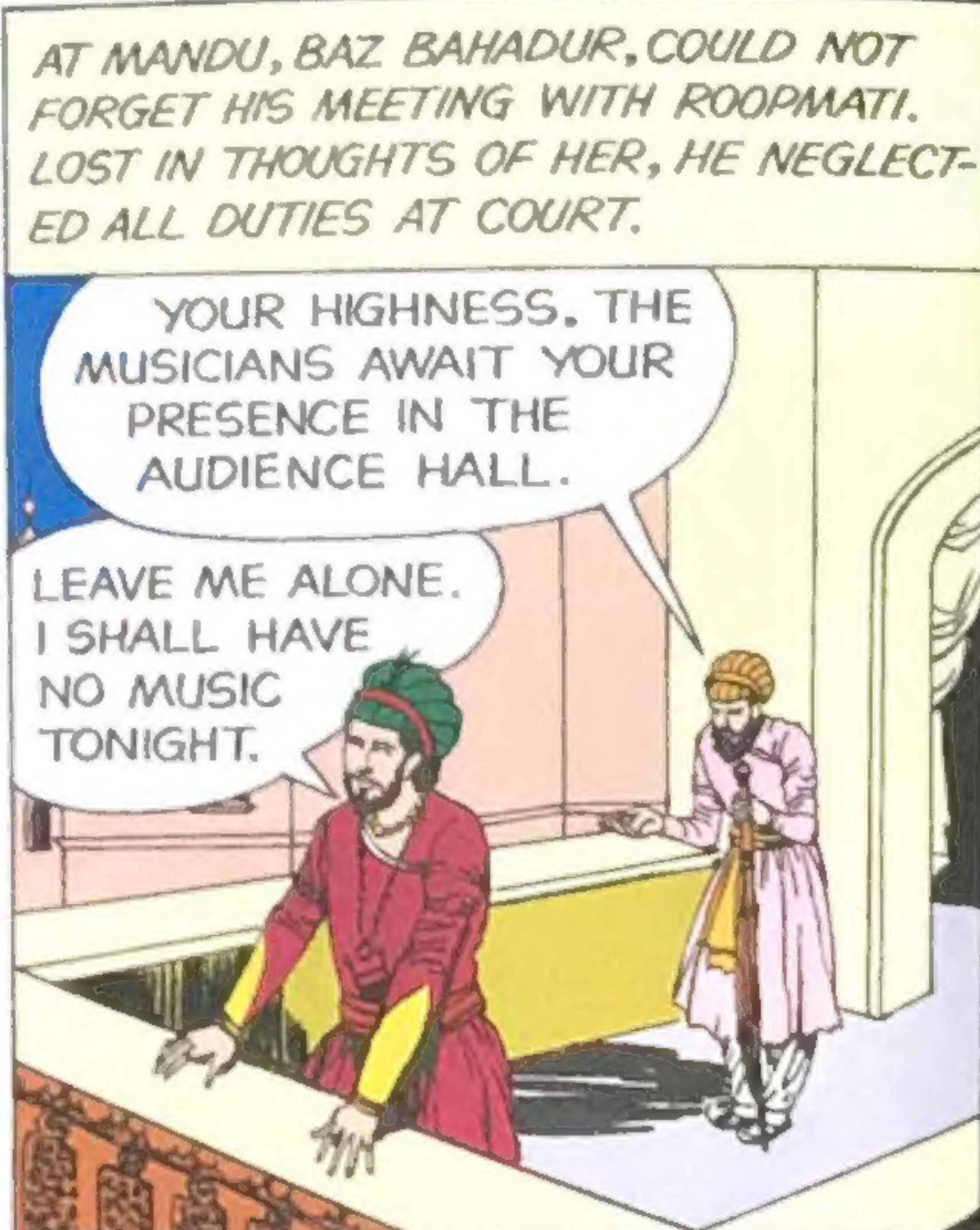






WHERE TO?  
THE SULTAN'S  
PALACE?

HUSH...



AT MANDU, BAZ BAHADUR, COULD NOT FORGET HIS MEETING WITH ROOPMATI. LOST IN THOUGHTS OF HER, HE NEGLECTED ALL DUTIES AT COURT.

YOUR HIGHNESS, THE MUSICIANS AWAIT YOUR PRESENCE IN THE AUDIENCE HALL.

LEAVE ME ALONE. I SHALL HAVE NO MUSIC TONIGHT.



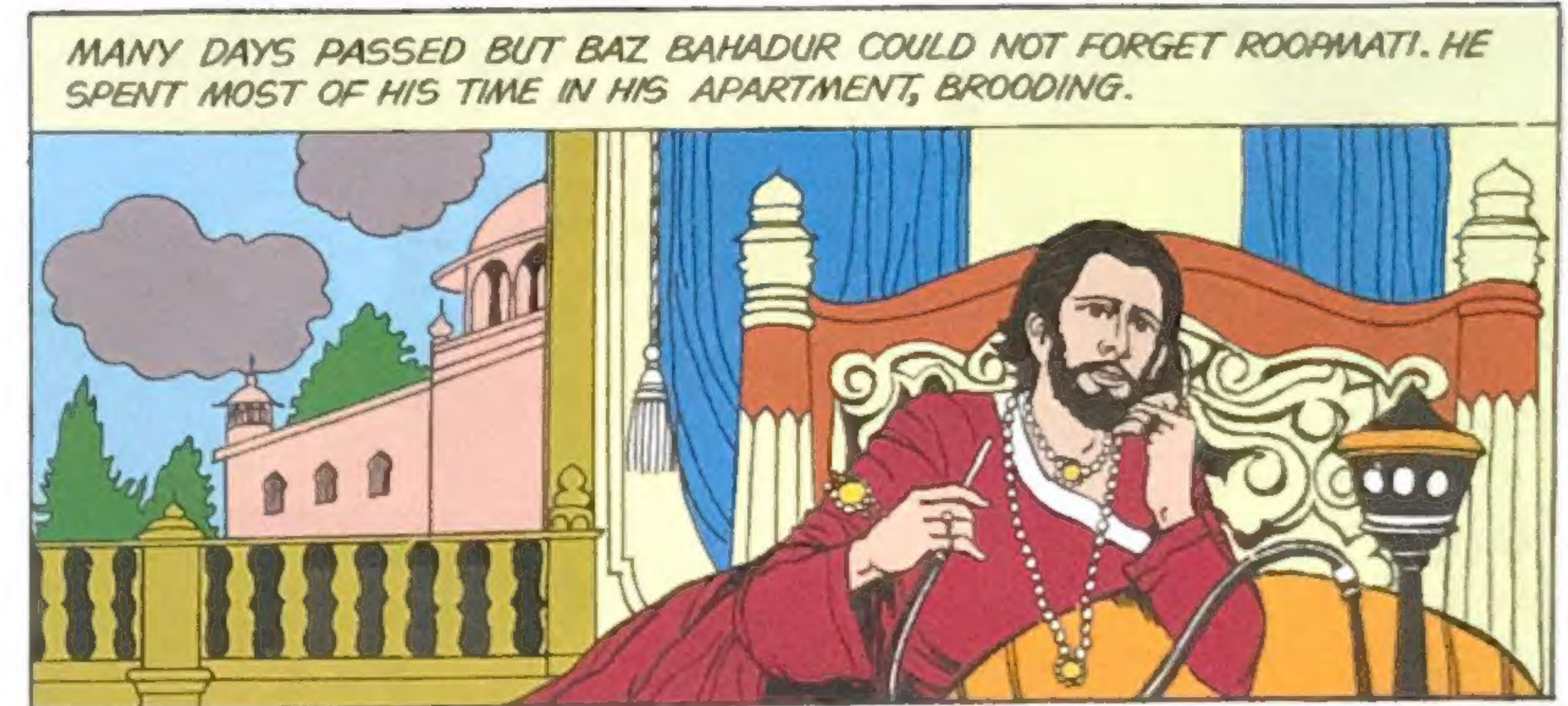
IN THE DARBAR HALL -

WHAT? NO MUSIC TONIGHT! THE SULTAN IS A CHANGED MAN!

WITHOUT MUSIC AND DANCE, MANDU WILL BE CHANGED TOO!

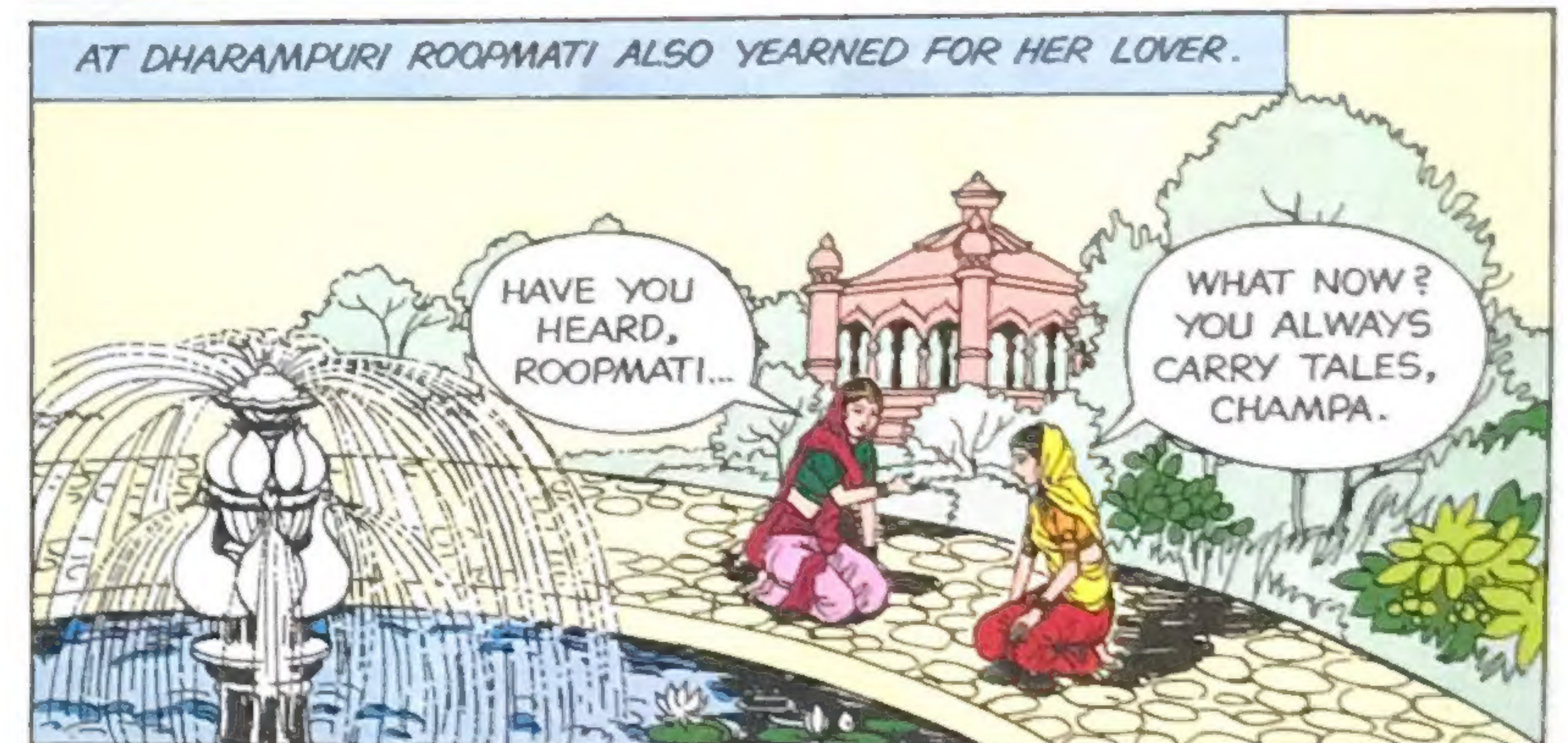


THE SULTAN IS NOT WELL. TODAY'S HUNT WAS TIRING, AND HE SEEKS REST.



ROOPMATI

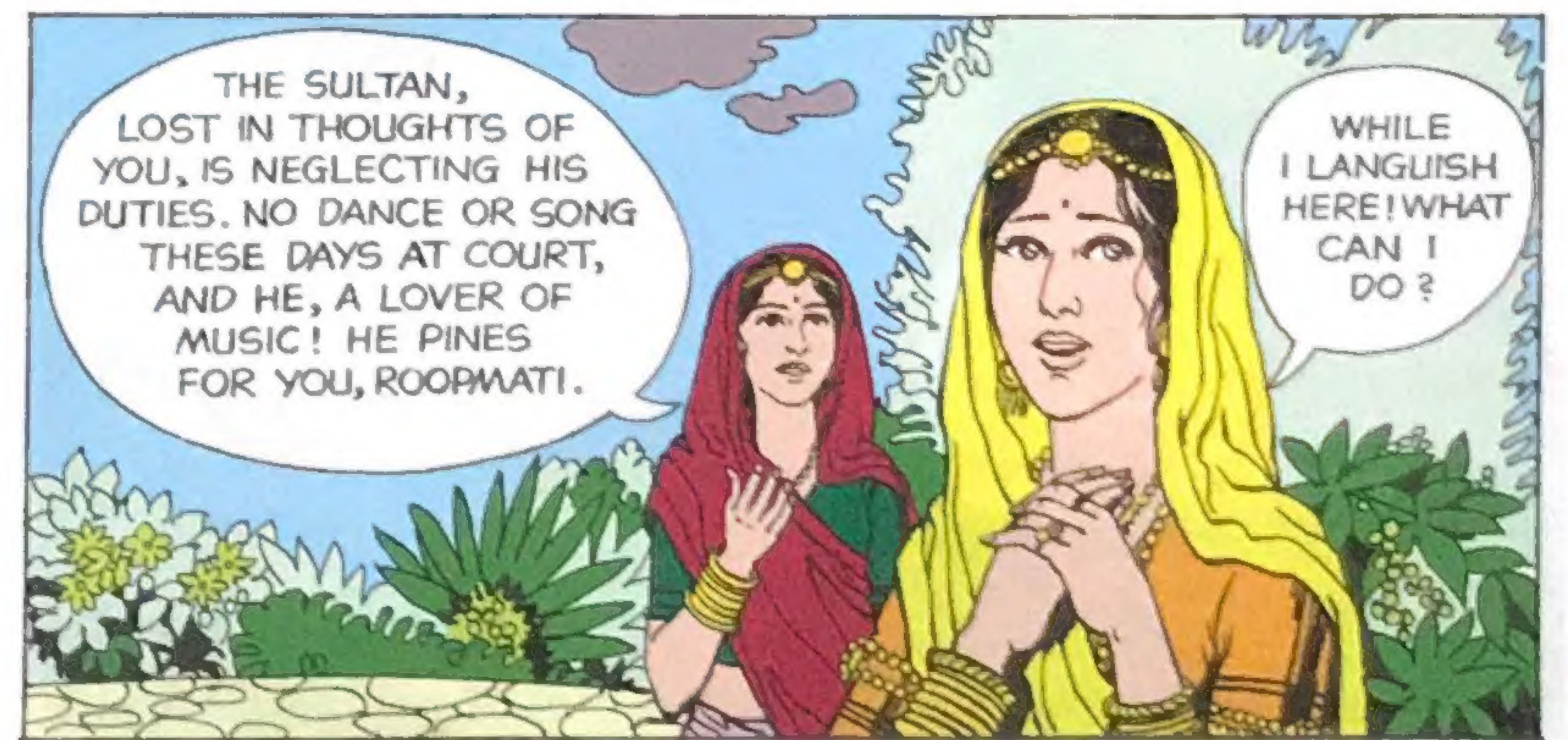
MANY DAYS PASSED BUT BAZ BAHADUR COULD NOT FORGET ROOPMATI. HE SPENT MOST OF HIS TIME IN HIS APARTMENT, BROODING.



AT DHARAMPURI ROOPMATI ALSO YEARNED FOR HER LOVER.

HAVE YOU HEARD, ROOPMATI...

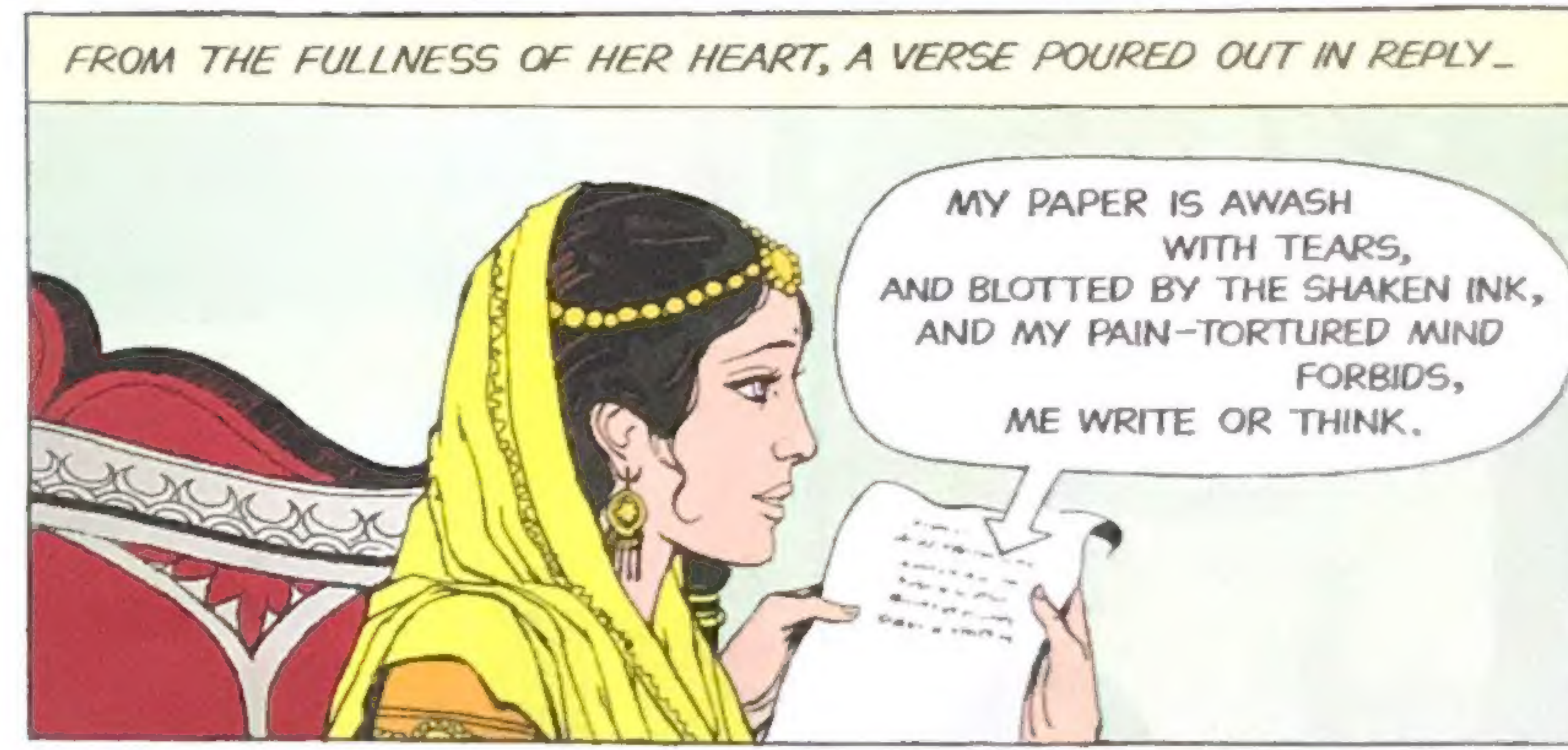
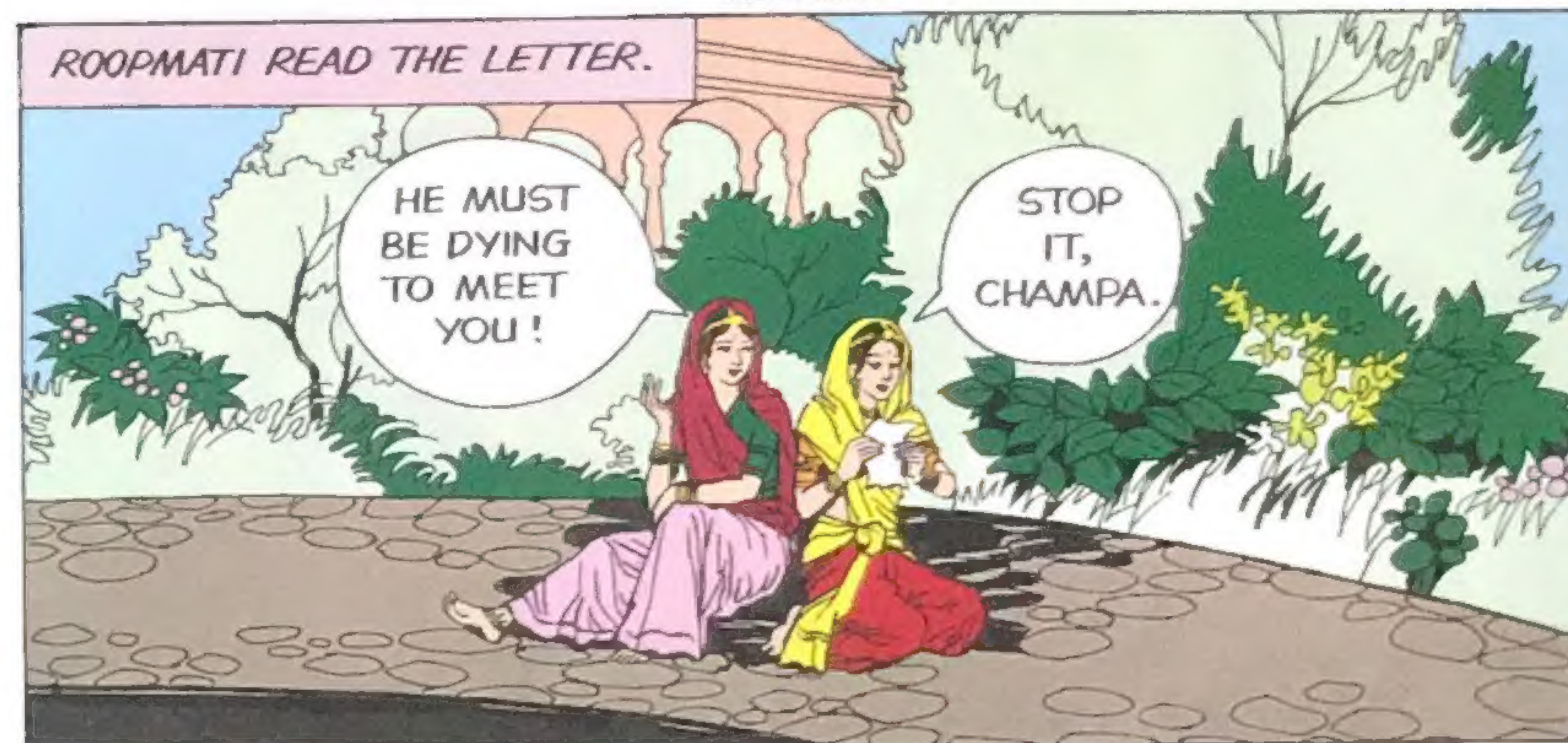
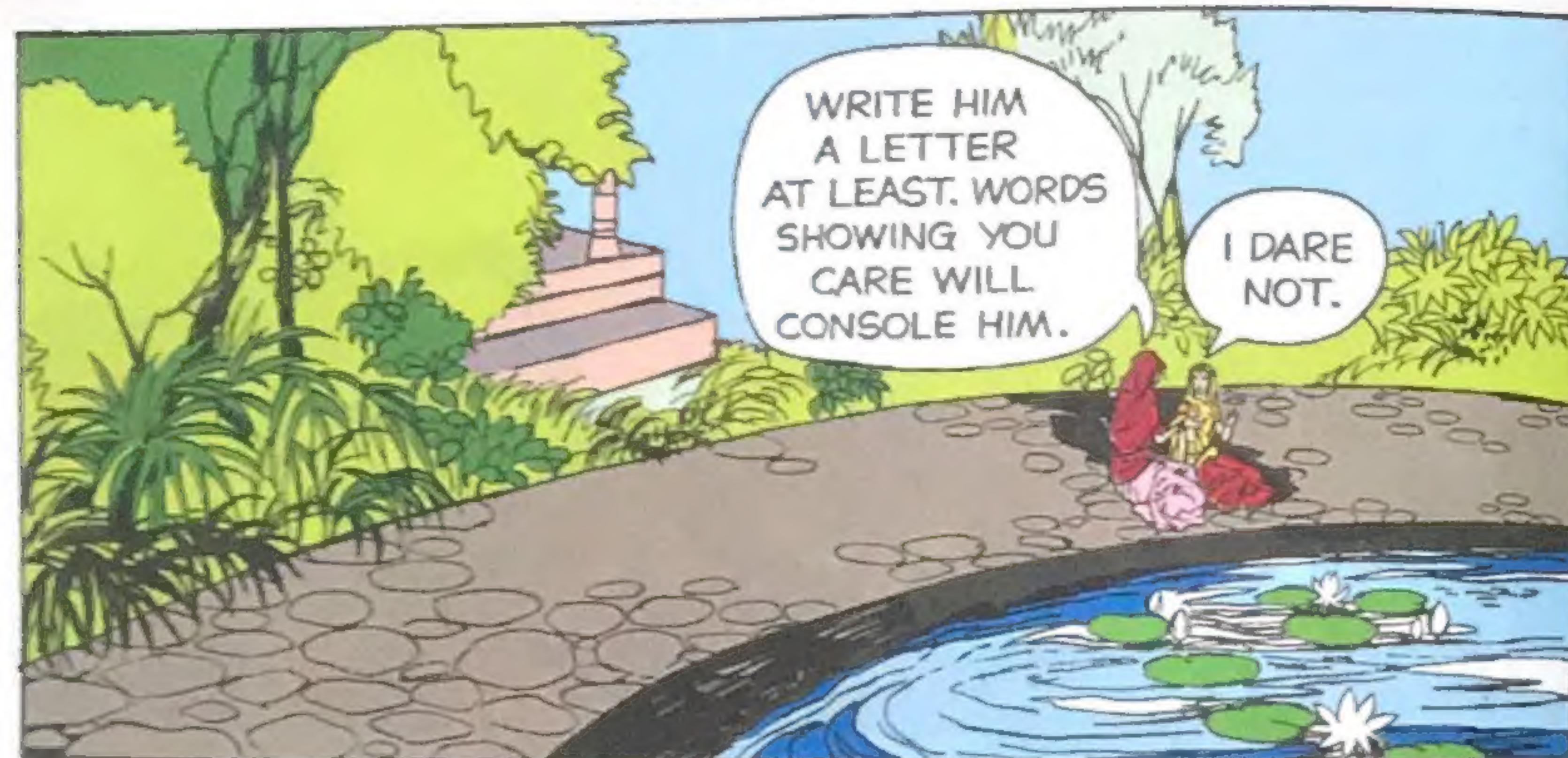
WHAT NOW? YOU ALWAYS CARRY TALES, CHAMPA.



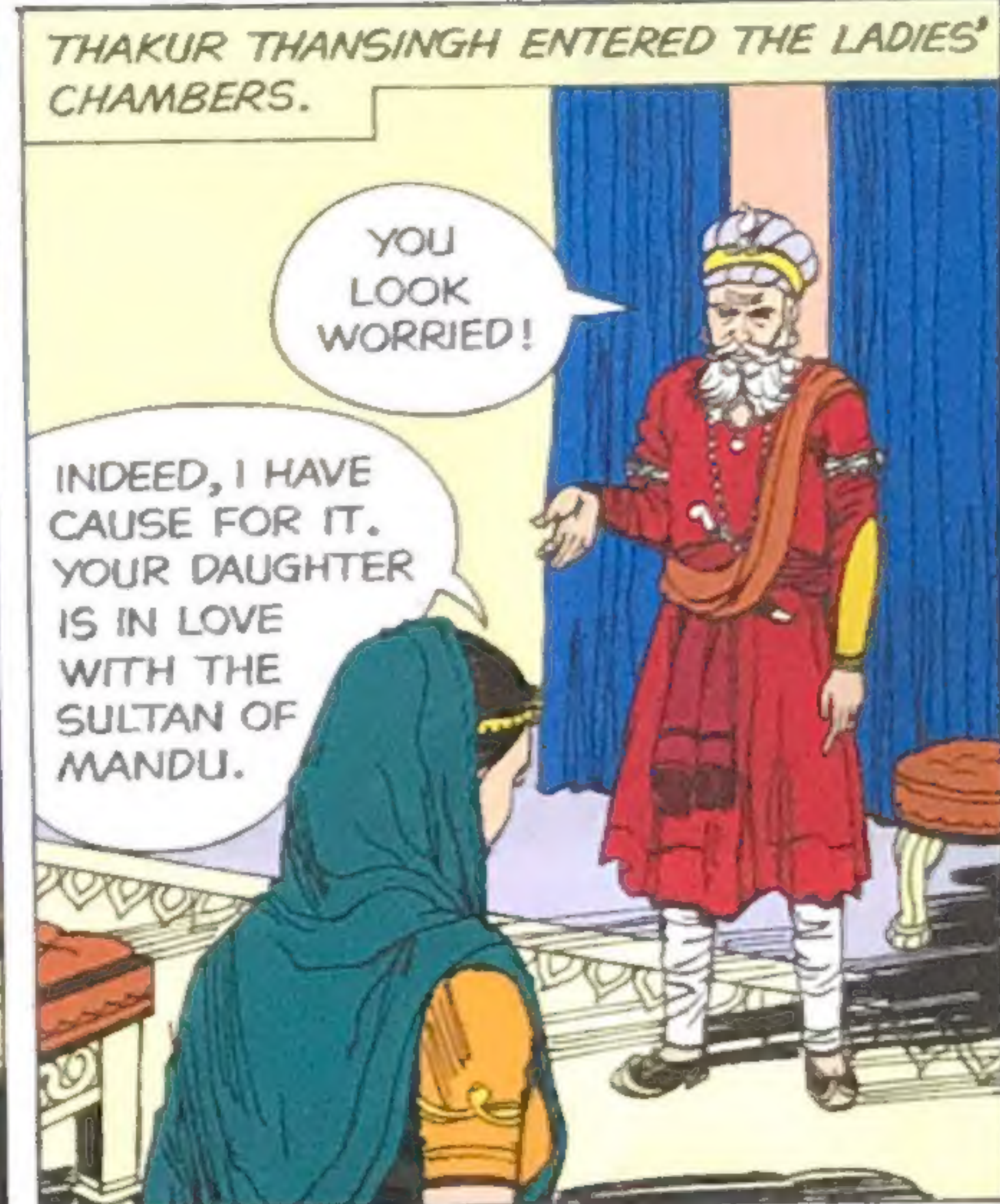
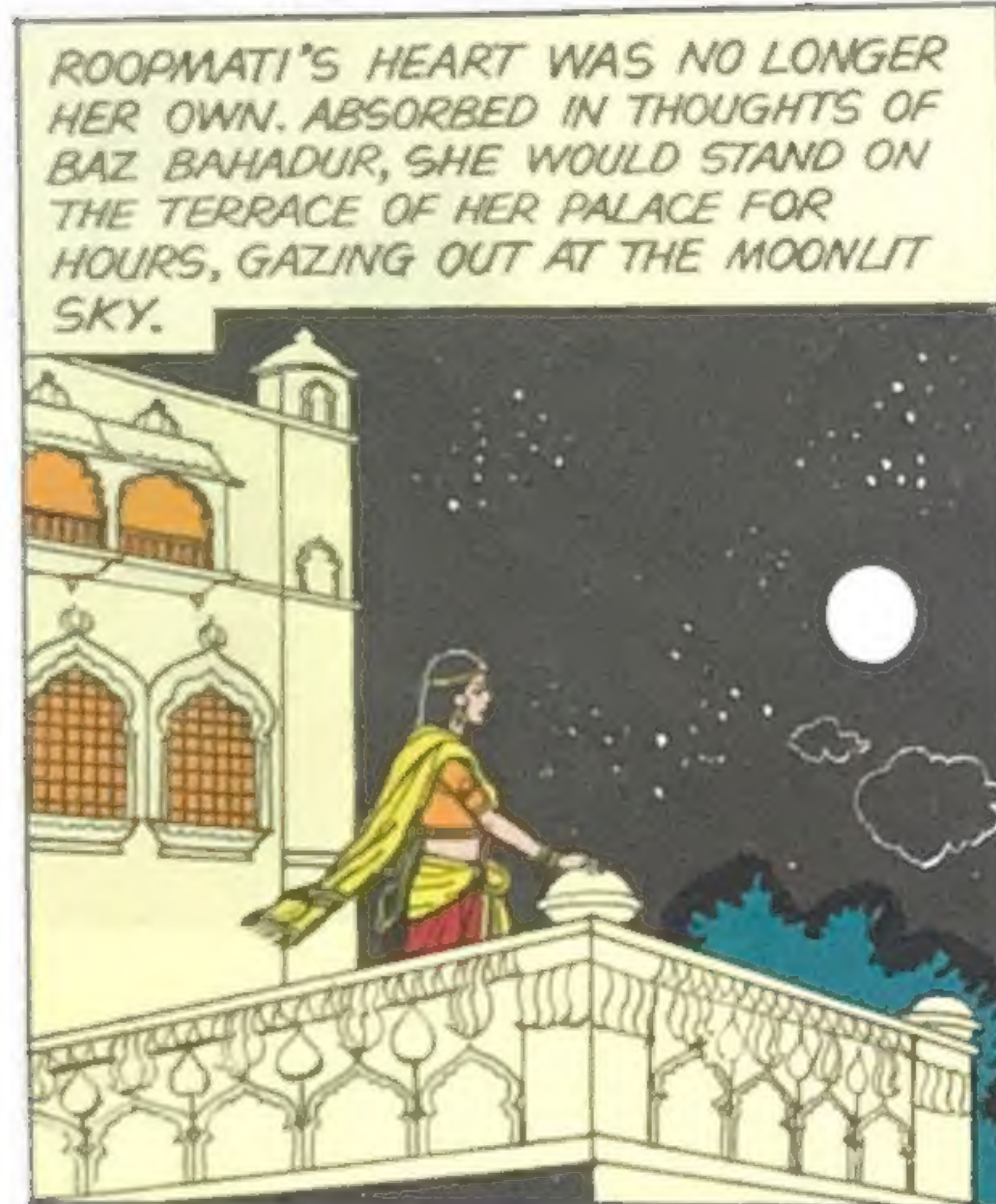
THE SULTAN, LOST IN THOUGHTS OF YOU, IS NEGLECTING HIS DUTIES. NO DANCE OR SONG THESE DAYS AT COURT, AND HE, A LOVER OF MUSIC! HE PINES FOR YOU, ROOPMATI.

WHILE I LANGUISH HERE! WHAT CAN I DO?



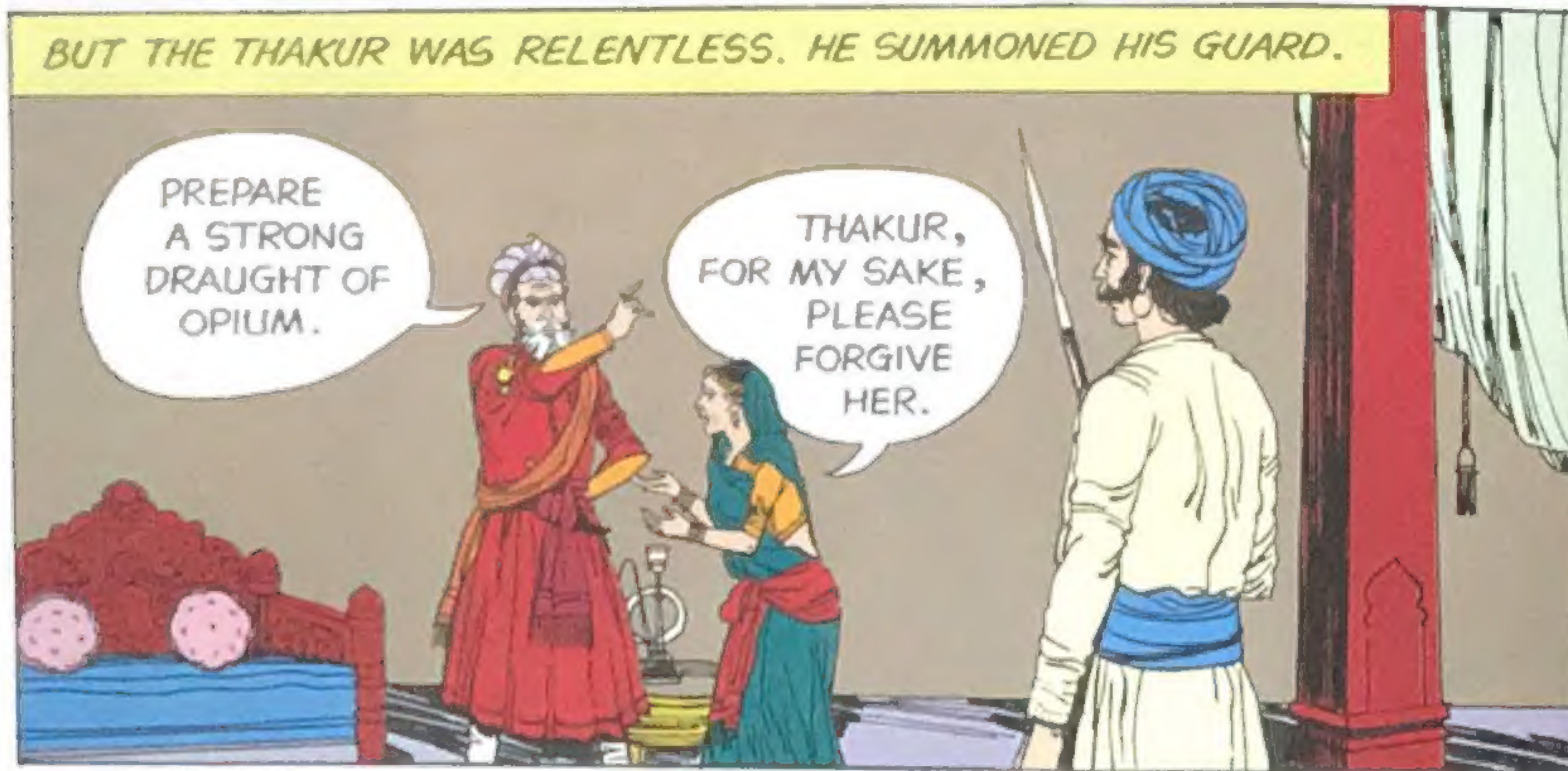








BUT THE THAKUR WAS RELENTLESS. HE SUMMONED HIS GUARD.



THE THAKUR STORMED OUT OF THE ROOM IN A MIGHTY TEMPER AND—



THE PRIEST ARRIVED AT THE THAKUR'S PARLOUR AND TRIED TO MEDIATE.



WHEN REASONING FAILED TO CHANGE THE THAKUR'S MIND, THE PRIEST TOOK RECOURSE TO RELIGIOUS PRETEXT.

DON'T DEFILE THIS SPRING FESTIVAL BY SACRIFICING THE FAIREST OF ITS FLOWERS.

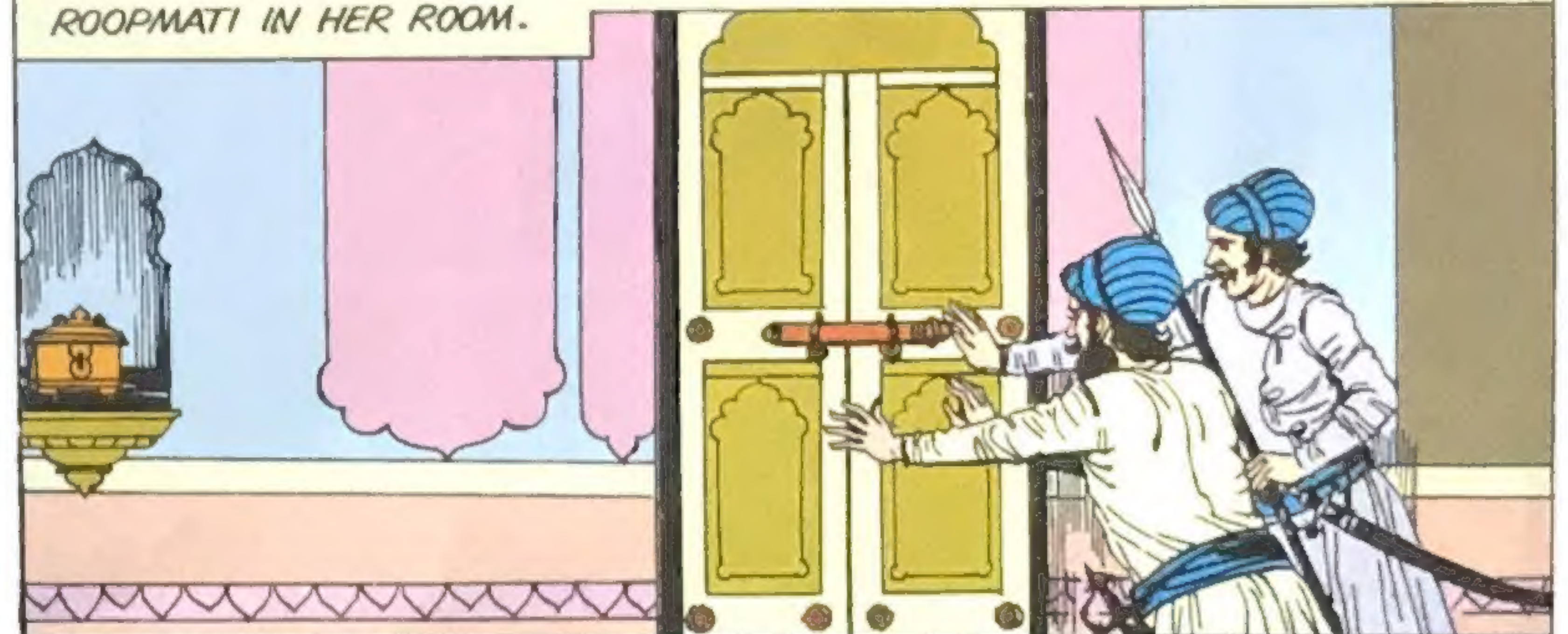


THE RUSE WORKED.

WHAT SHOULD I DO? IMPRISON ROOPMATI? I SHALL THINK IT OVER TONIGHT.



THE VERY NEXT DAY, AT THE THAKUR'S ORDERS, TWO GUARDS IMPRISONED ROOPMATI IN HER ROOM.

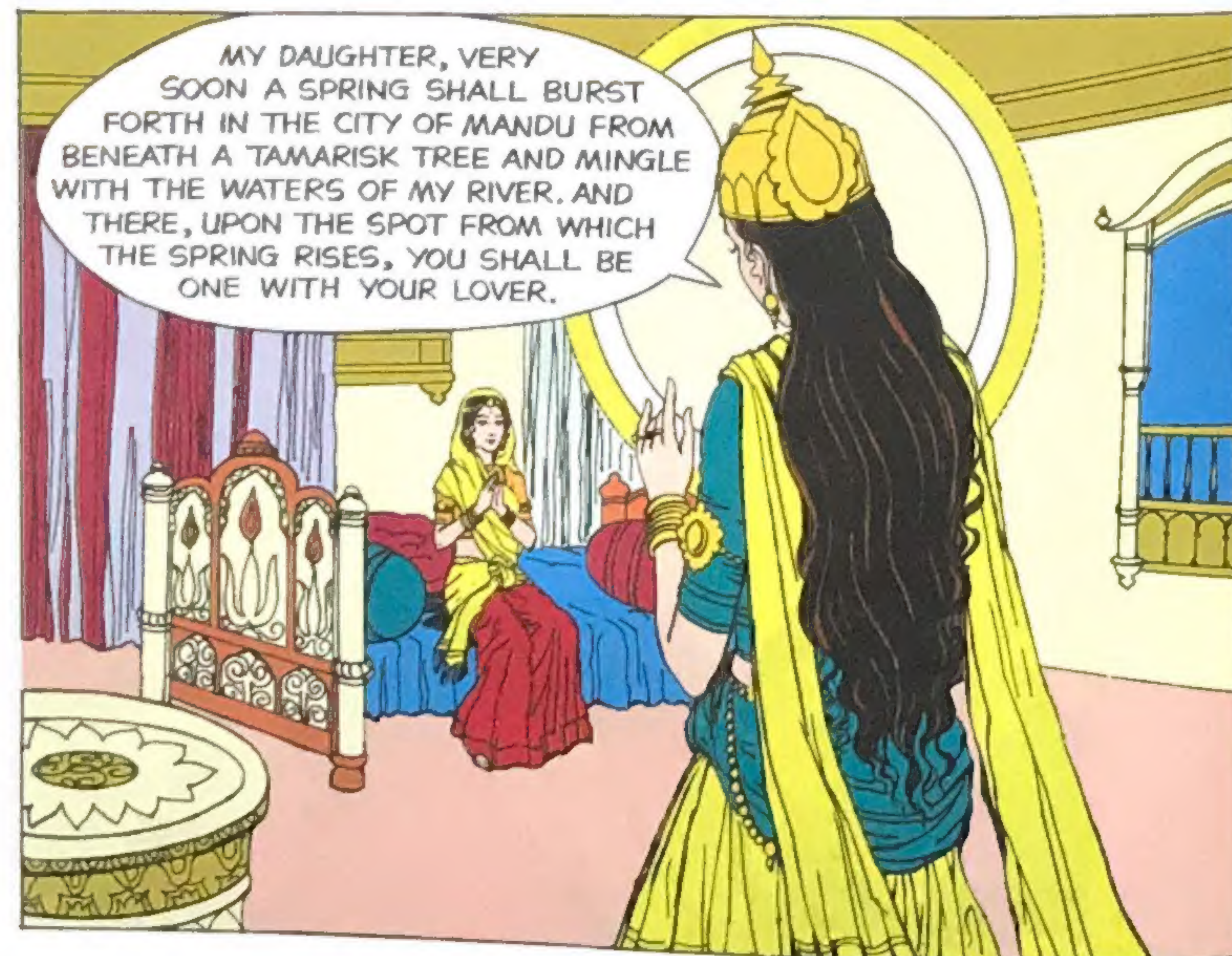


LOCKED UP IN HER ROOM, ROOPMATI SOBBED HERSELF INTO AN UNEASY SLUMBER.





SUDDENLY, SHE WAS AWAKE. A DAZZLING LIGHT PERVADED THE ROOM AND A RADIANT WOMAN PUT HER HAND LOVINGLY ON ROOPMATI'S SHOULDER.



THE GODDESS DEPARTED AND ROOPMATI ONCE AGAIN RETURNED TO SLEEP.



AT MANDU, BAZ BAHADUR, ON HEARING ABOUT ROOPMATI'S IMPRISONMENT, DECIDED TO MARCH ON THE RAJPUT STRONGHOLD OF DHARAMPURI.

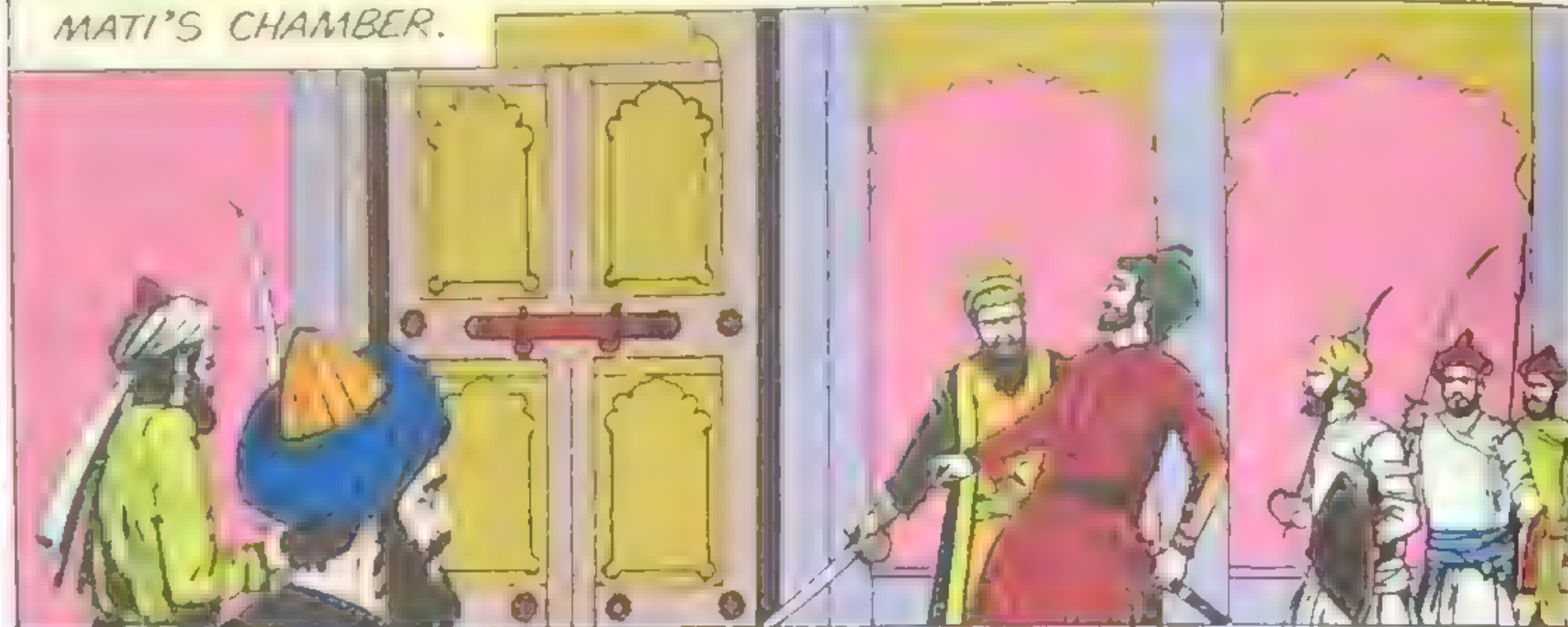


IN THE PRE-DAWN ENCOUNTER, THE RAJPUTS WERE TAKEN BY SURPRISE.





BAZ BAHADUR WON THE BATTLE AND PROCEEDED TOWARDS ROOPMATI'S CHAMBER.



ROOPMATI WAS FREED.



I THOUGHT I WOULD NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN!

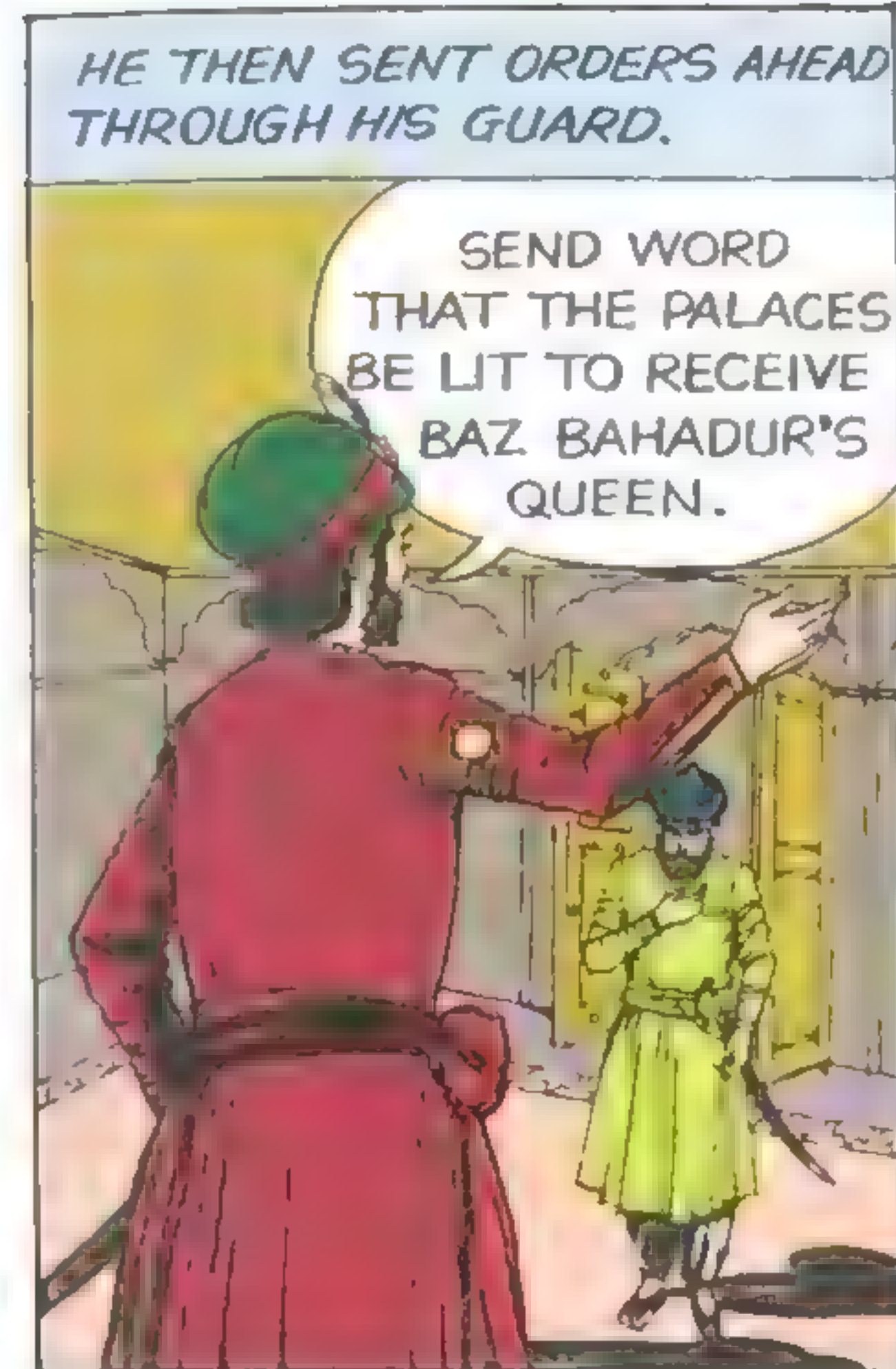
HAD I LOST YOU, I WOULD HAVE DESTROYED EVERYTHING IN THIS WORLD.

BAZ BAHADUR DID NOT TAKE DHARAMPURI. HE RELEASED THE THAKUR.



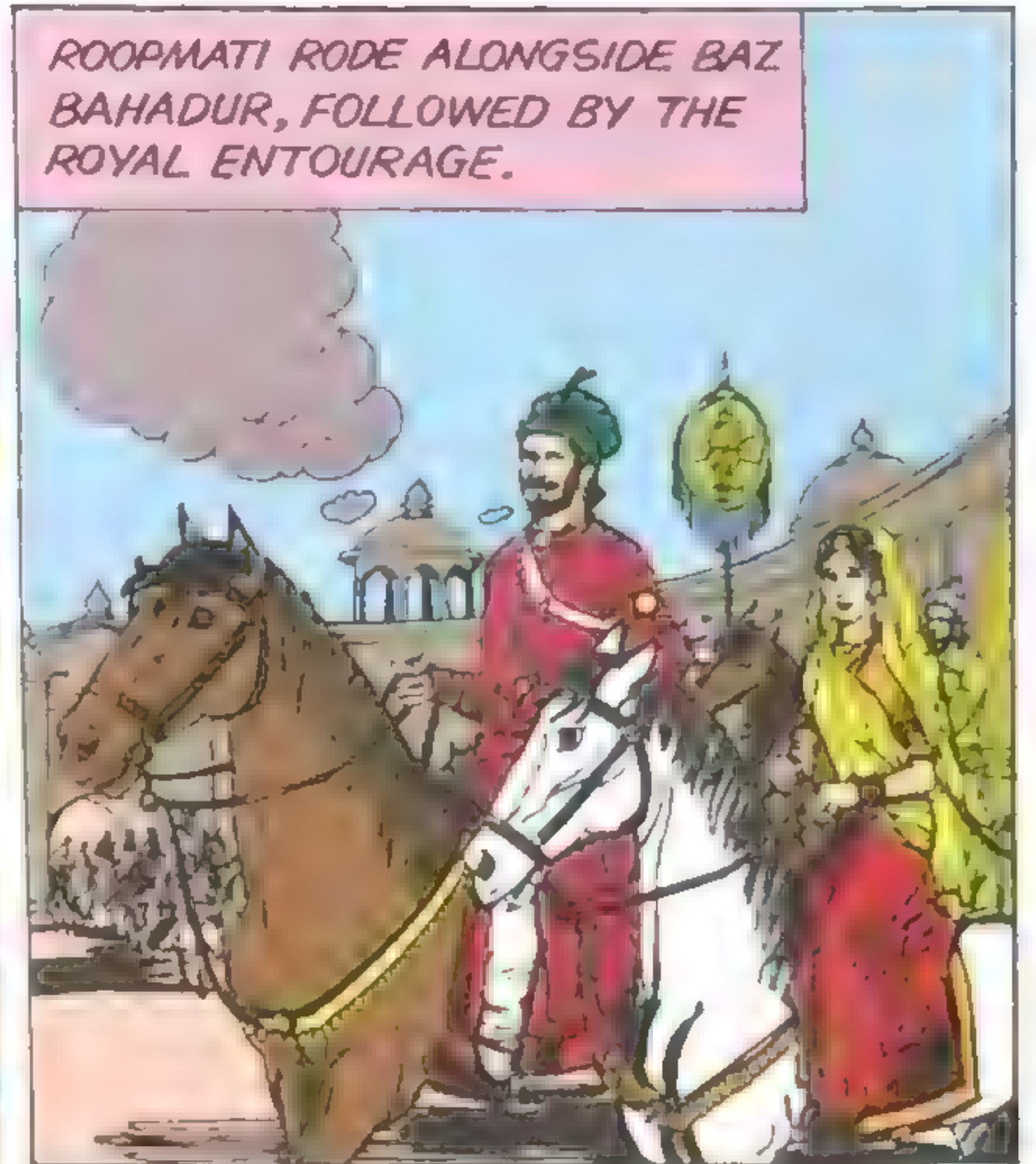
I HAVE NO DESIGNS ON DHARAMPURI. I RESPECT YOU, THAKUR. I SHALL MAKE YOUR DAUGHTER THE RIGHTFUL QUEEN OF MANDU.

HE THEN SENT ORDERS AHEAD THROUGH HIS GUARD.



SEND WORD THAT THE PALACES BE LIT TO RECEIVE BAZ BAHADUR'S QUEEN.

ROOPMATI RODE ALONGSIDE BAZ BAHADUR, FOLLOWED BY THE ROYAL ENTOURAGE.



WITH GREAT REGALIA, THE ROYAL COUPLE WAS RECEIVED AT MANDU.

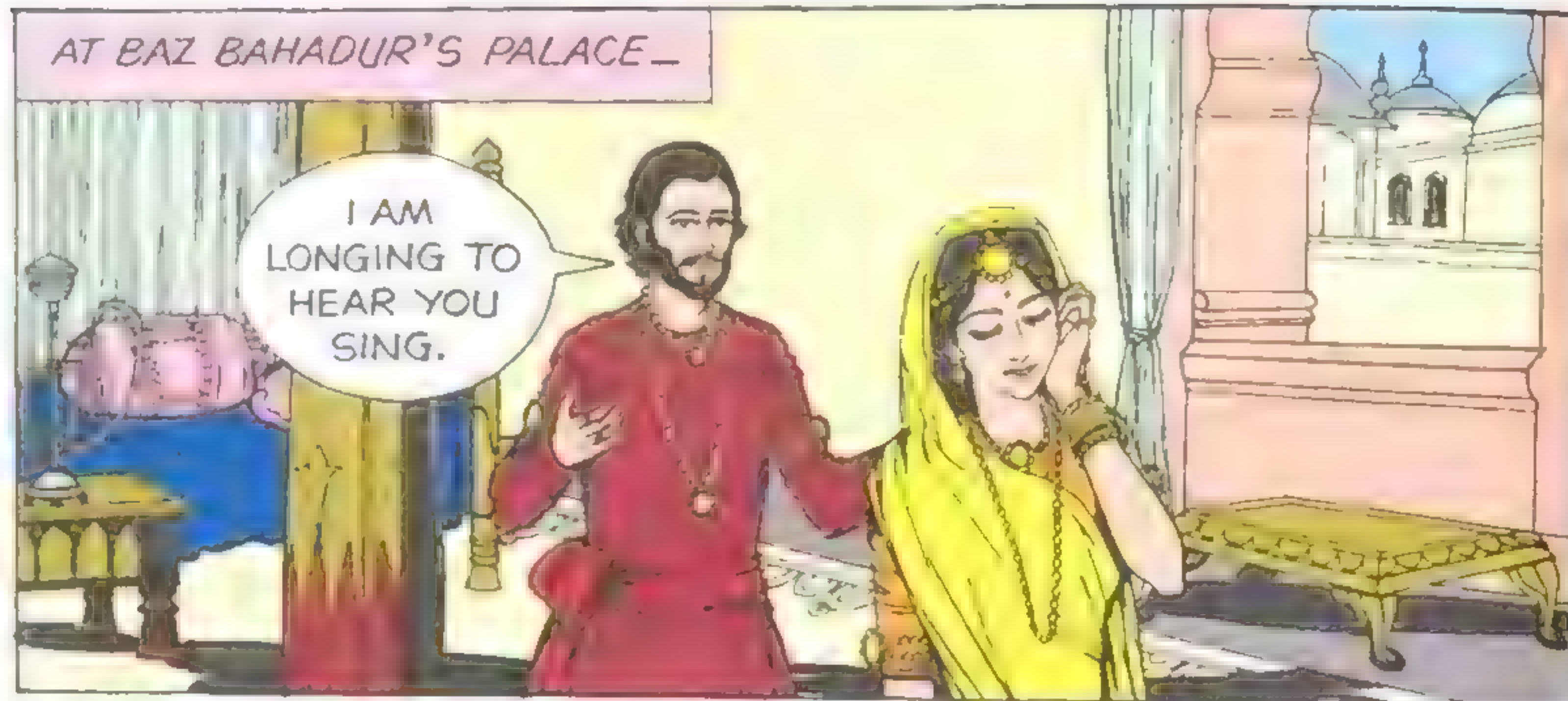


LONG LIVE BAZ BAHADUR!

LONG LIVE OUR KING AND QUEEN!



AT BAZ BAHADUR'S PALACE...



ROOPMATI SANG, AND BAZ BAHADUR LISTENED WITH RAPT ATTENTION.

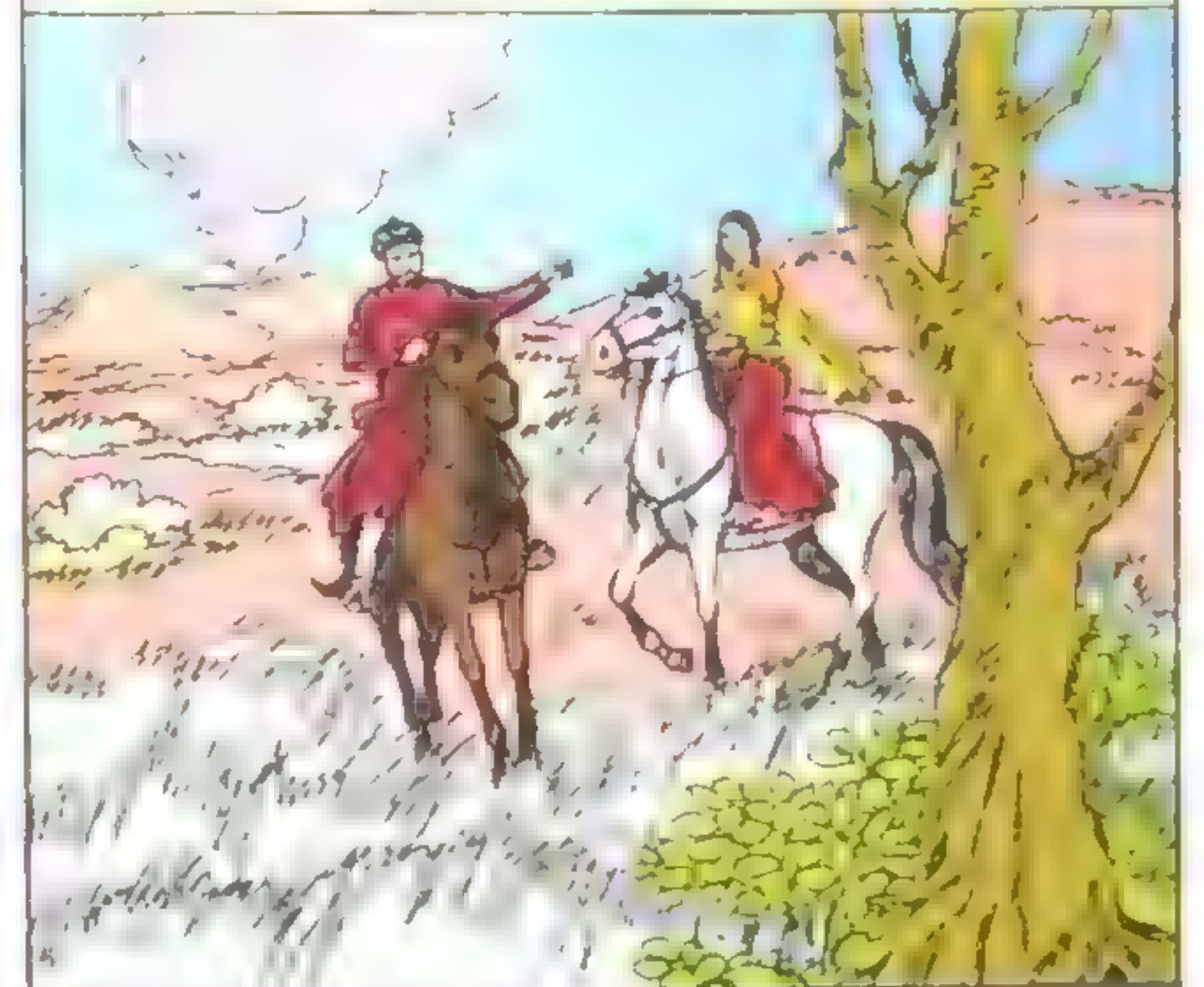


ROOPMATI TOLD HIM ABOUT HER MIDNIGHT VISION.

TOMORROW WE SHALL RIDE TO THE VALLEY OF THE REWA AND LOOK FOR THAT SPRING THE GODDESS MENTIONED.



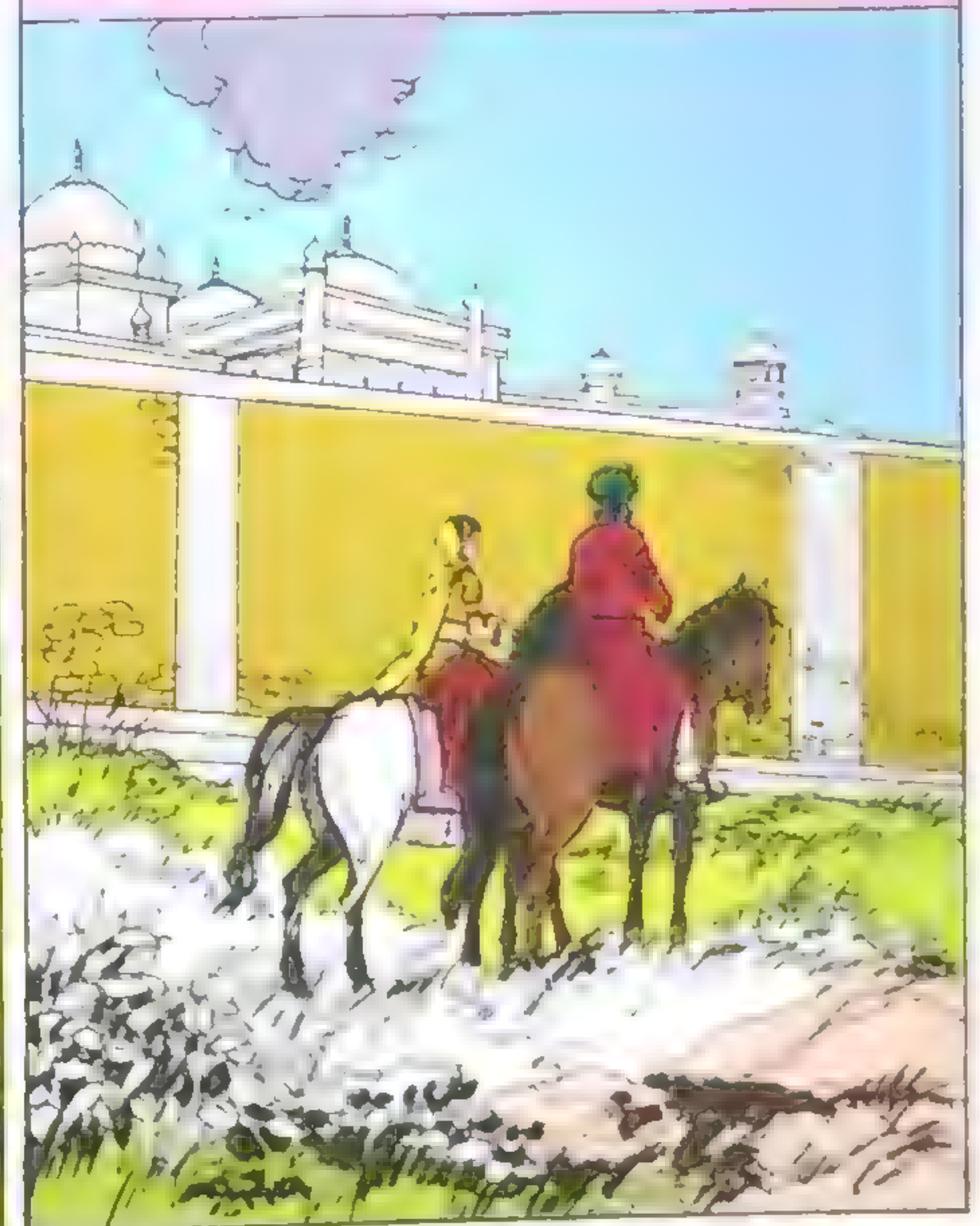
THE NEXT DAY ROOPMATI AND BAZ BAHADUR RODE THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE REWA...



...UP THE GRASSY SLOPES...

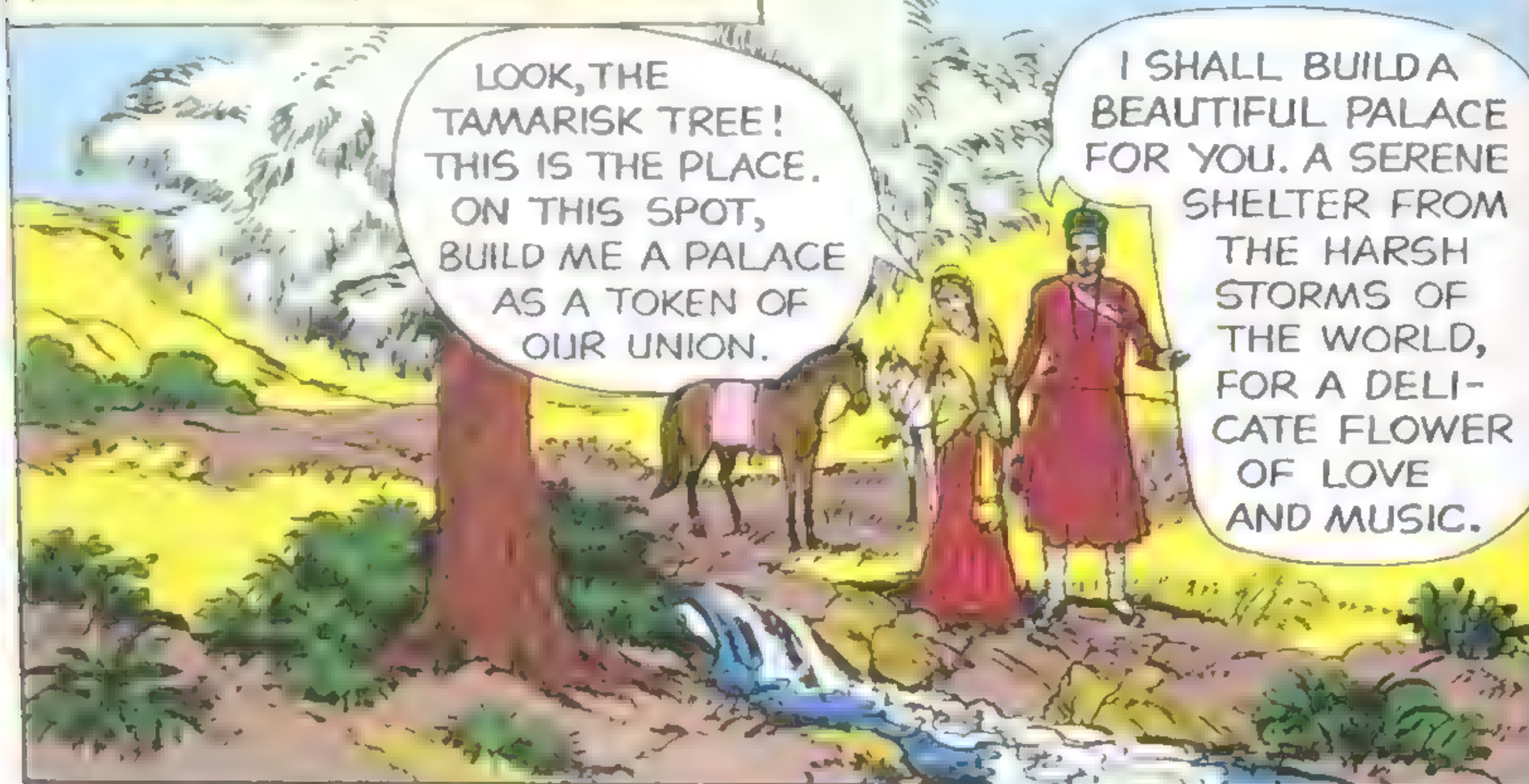


...PAST THE WHITE MAUSOLEUM OF HOSHANG SHAH, ALONG THE WALLS OF THE GREAT MOSQUE.





THEY REACHED A SHELTERED VALLEY IN THE HILLS, AND THERE BENEATH THE TAMARISK TREE, JUST AS THE GODDESS HAD PROMISED, GUSHED FORTH A SPRING OF PURE WATER.



ON THAT SPOT BAZ BAHADUR BUILT A PALACE AS DESIRED BY ROOPMATI.



WHEN IT WAS READY, HE TOOK ROOPMATI TO THE TERRACE OF THE PALACE.



WHENEVER BAZ BAHADUR WAS BUSY WITH COURT AFFAIRS, ROOPMATI SAT ON THE TERRACE LOOKING AT DISTANT DHARAMPURI, WHERE THE TEMPLE PRIEST LIT A GREAT LAMP AT TWILIGHT, SENDING ROOPMATI INTO A TRANCE, COMPOSING VERSES OF SEPARATION FROM THE PLACE OF HER BIRTH.





BAZ BAHADUR WAS NEVER TOO LONG AWAY FROM HER.



YOUR SONGS PIERCE MY HEART! YOUR VERSES ENCHANT ME! WITHOUT ROOPMATI, BAZ BAHADUR IS A CORPSE.

DO NOT SHOWER SUCH PRAISES UPON ME. I AM ONLY ROOPMATI, BAZ BAHADUR'S DEVOTEE.

BUT THE PEACE AND JOY OF MANDU WERE SHORT-LIVED. AKBAR HAD ASCENDED THE THRONE OF THE MUGHALS AND HE WAS CONSOLIDATING HIS EMPIRE. MANDU ATTRACTED HIS ATTENTION.

ADHAM KHAN, TAKE YOUR FORCES AND MARCH UPON THE DISTRICTS OF MALWA. THE AFGHAN WHO RULES THERE IRKS ME.



I LEAVE AT ONCE, YOUR MAJESTY!

ADHAM KHAN SET OUT WITH HIS ARMY.



AT MANDU -



SULTAN, THE MUGHAL ARMY IS ADVANCING TOWARDS MALWA.

TELL THE ARMY TO GEAR UP ITS DEFENCES.

AT ROOPMATI'S PALACE -



THE MUGHAL ARMY IS CLOSING IN ON MANDU. WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS?

I'LL FACE THEM WHEN THEY ARRIVE.





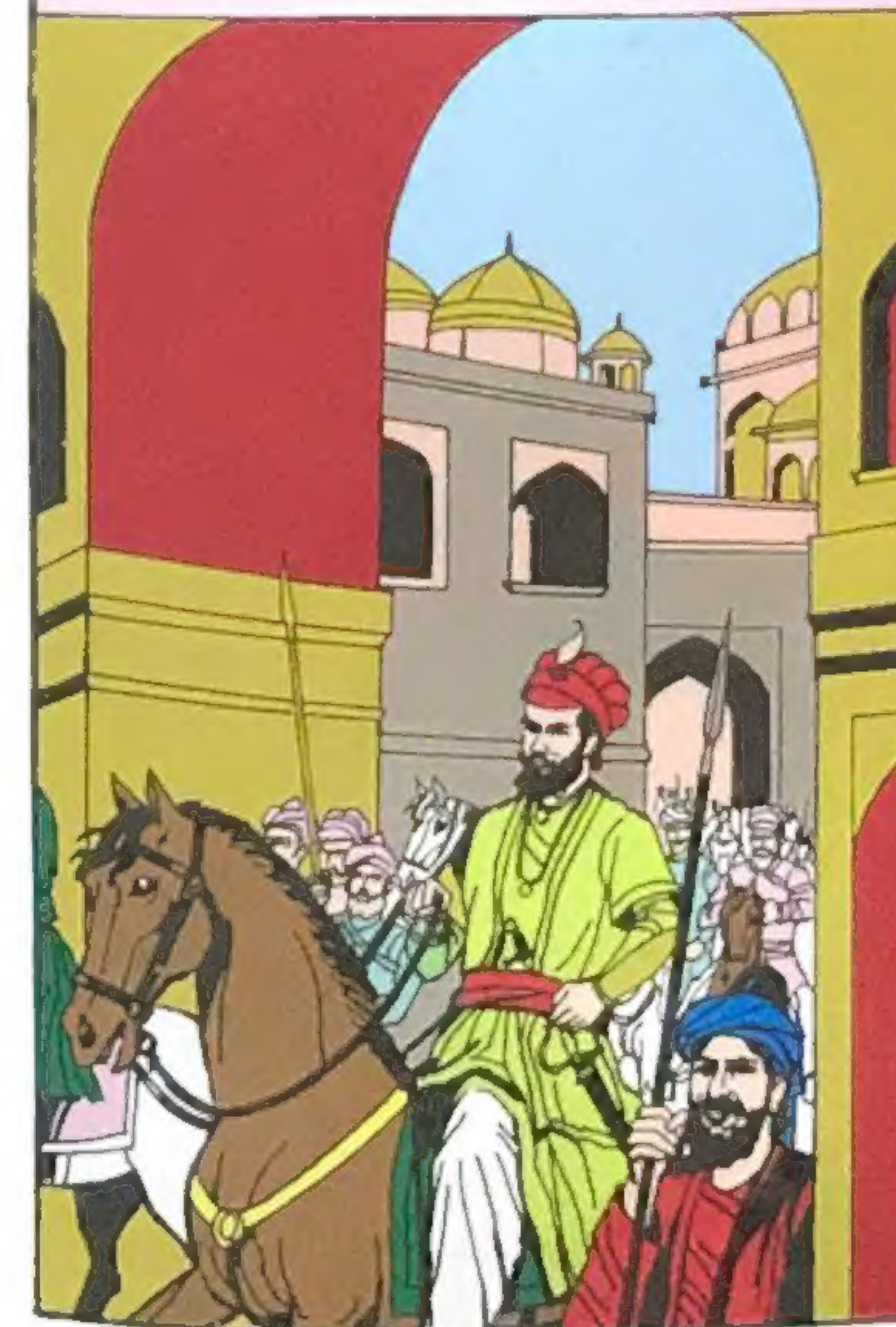
WHEN BAZ BAHADUR WAS READY, ROOPMATI APPLIED THE TILAK ON BAZ BAHADUR'S FOREHEAD.



BAZ BAHADUR LEFT WITH HIS FORCES. HE HAD SPENT HIS LIFE IN THE PLEASURES OF LOVE AND SONG. THIS WAS HIS FIRST REAL MILITARY OPERATION.



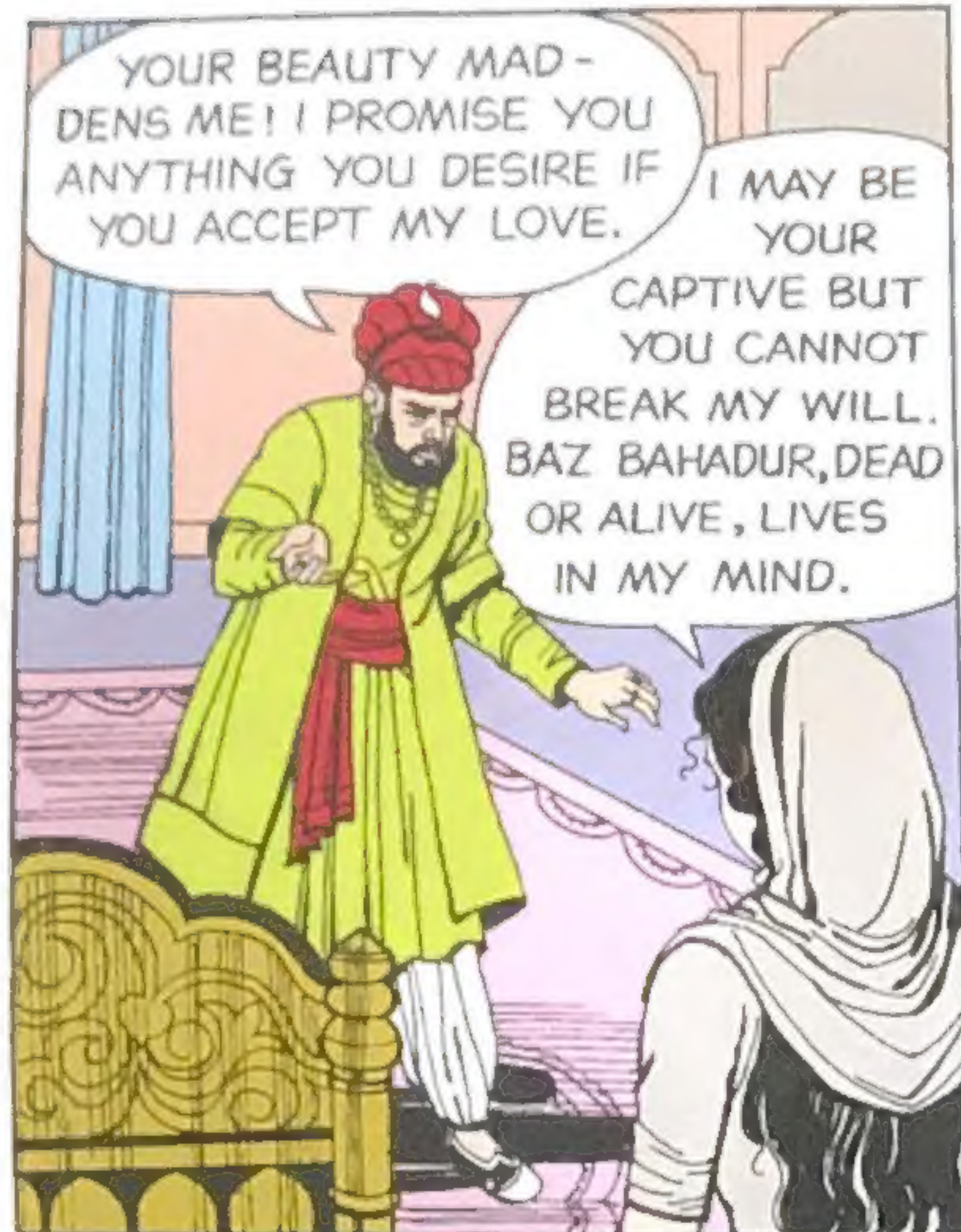
THE VICTORIOUS ADHAM KHAN MARCHED TO MANDU AT THE HEAD OF HIS FORCES.



HE ENTERED ROOPMATI'S CHAMBER. HE HAD HEARD ABOUT HER CHARMS.

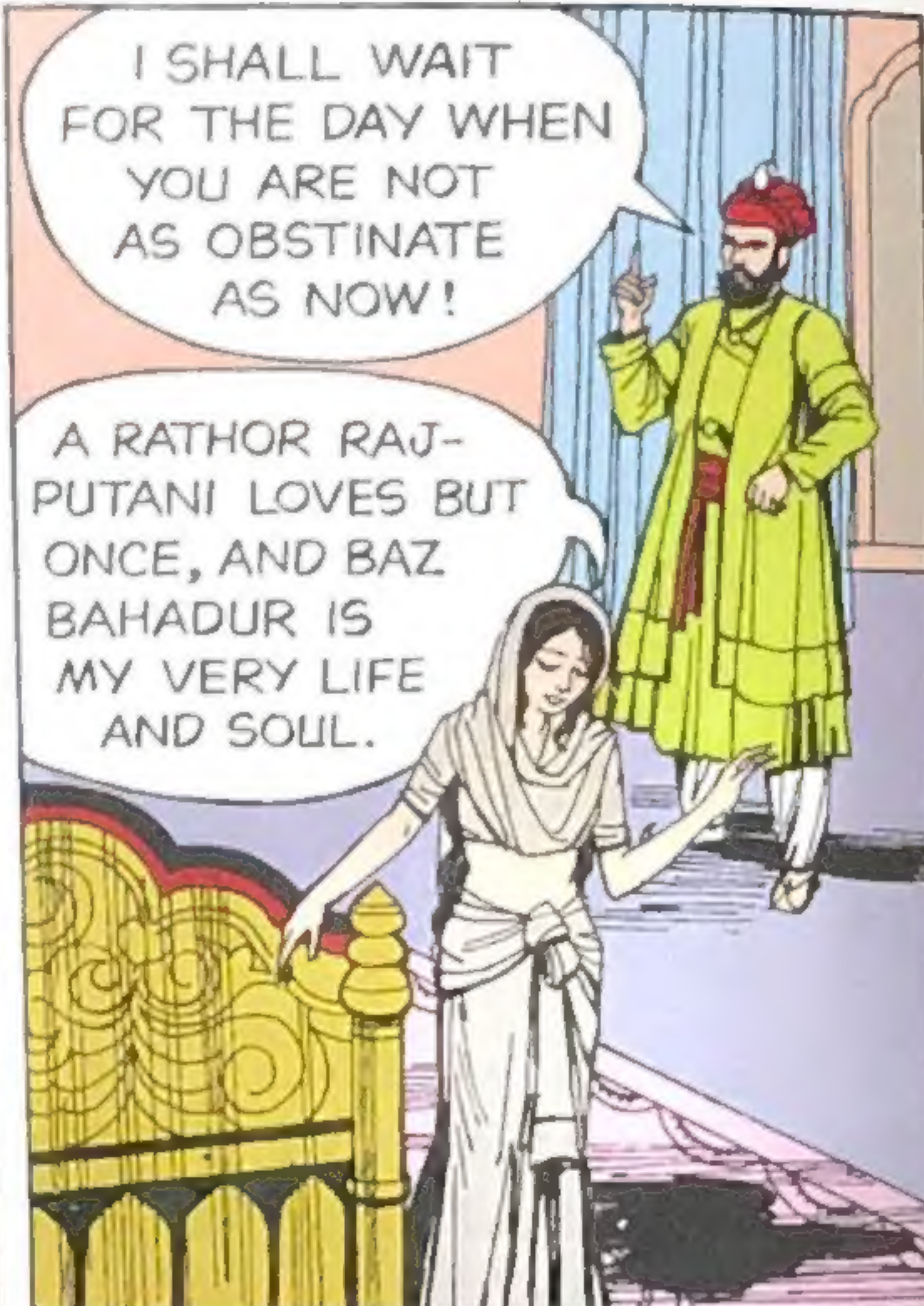






YOUR BEAUTY MAD-  
DENS ME! I PROMISE YOU  
ANYTHING YOU DESIRE IF  
YOU ACCEPT MY LOVE.

I MAY BE  
YOUR  
CAPTIVE BUT  
YOU CANNOT  
BREAK MY WILL.  
BAZ BAHADUR, DEAD  
OR ALIVE, LIVES  
IN MY MIND.



I SHALL WAIT  
FOR THE DAY WHEN  
YOU ARE NOT  
AS OBSTINATE  
AS NOW!

A RATHOR RAJ-  
PUTANI LOVES BUT  
ONCE, AND BAZ  
BAHADUR IS  
MY VERY LIFE  
AND SOUL.



ADHAM KHAN LEFT HER.

OH, GODDESS  
REWA, WHAT  
HAVE I DONE  
TO SUFFER  
SO?



FOR THREE DAYS ROOPMATI DID NOT  
EAT OR DRINK. ON THE THIRD NIGHT  
SHE SUMMONED HER MAID.

DRESS ME  
UP IN MY  
BRIDAL  
ATTIRE.

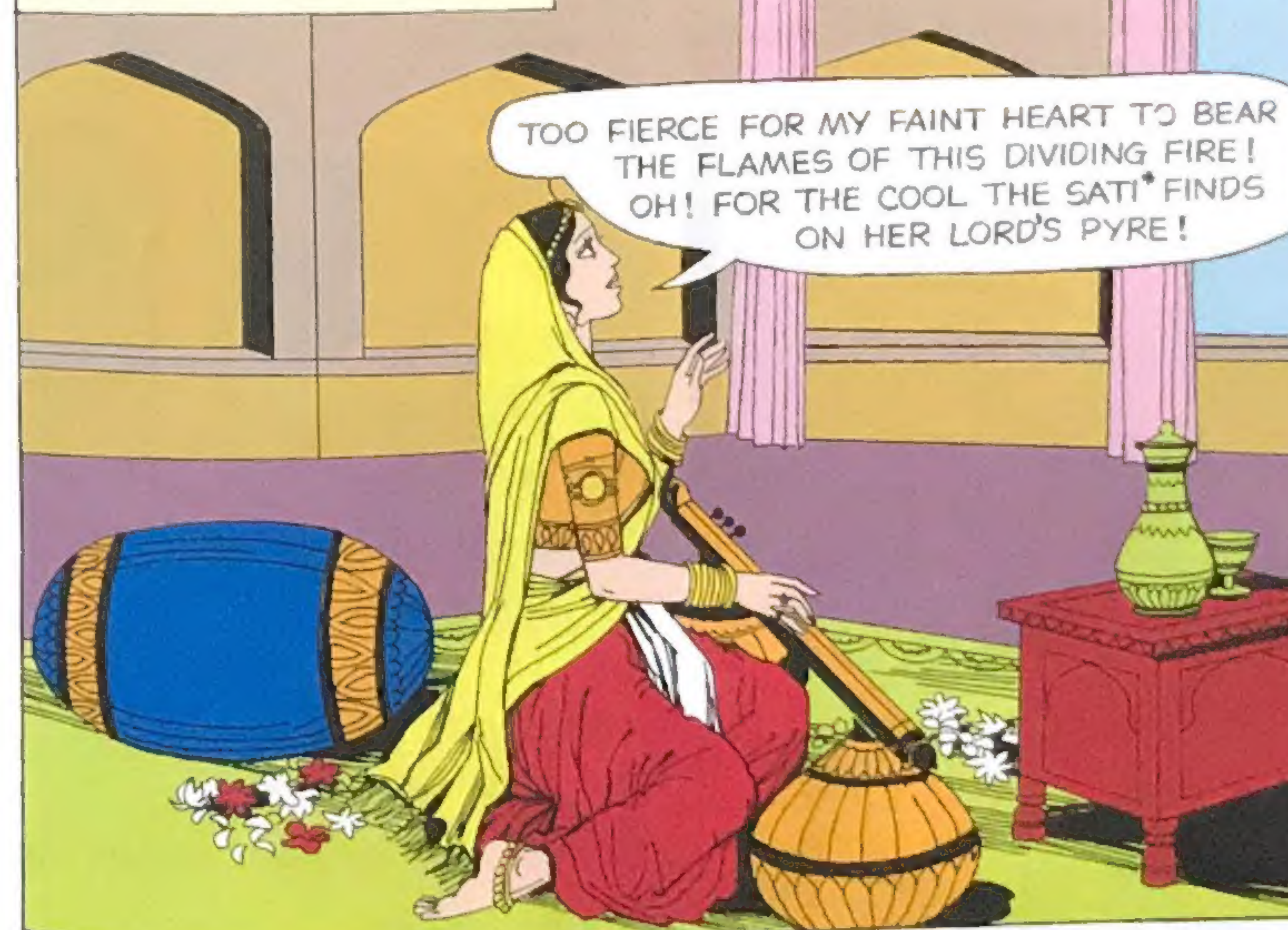


AT ADHAM KHAN'S COURT.

SIRE, GOOD  
NEWS! ROOPMATI  
HAS DONNED HER  
WEDDING GARMENTS-  
FOR YOU, SIRE.

ALMS OF GOLD  
AND SILVER TO  
THE POOR!  
LET THE  
PALACE  
BE LIT!  
TONIGHT,  
WE MAKE  
MERRY AND  
REJOICE!

ROOPMATI, DRESSED AS A BRIDE, HER HEART FILLED WITH REMINISCENCES OF  
BAZ BAHADUR, PLAYED UPON HER BEEN. HER VOICE WAS PLAINTIVE, LIKE  
THE NOTES OF A BIRD THAT HAD LOST ITS MATE. THE WHOLE NIGHT  
PASSED IN THIS MANNER.

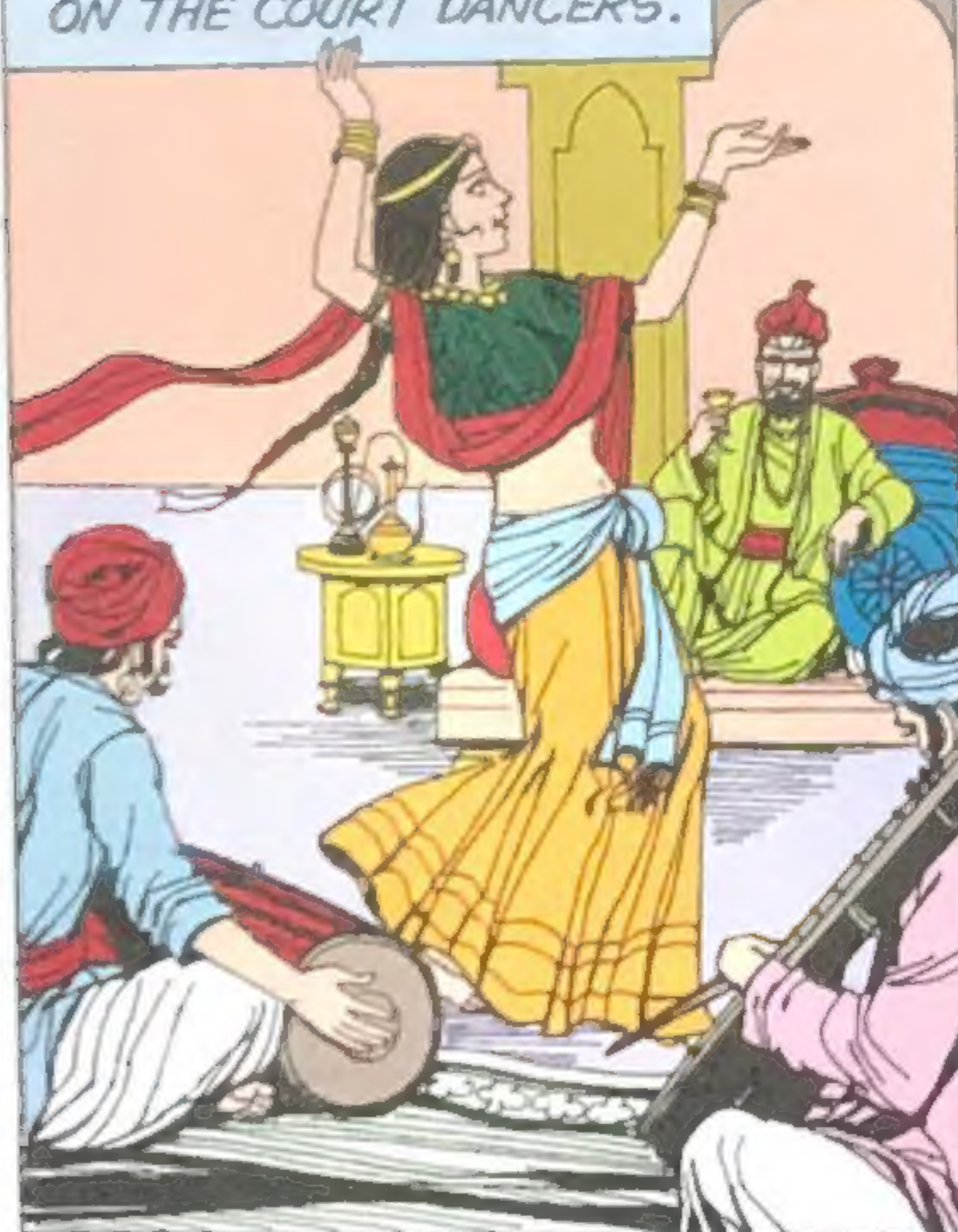


TOO FIERCE FOR MY FAINT HEART TO BEAR  
THE FLAMES OF THIS DIVIDING FIRE!  
OH! FOR THE COOL THE SATI\* FINDS  
ON HER LORD'S PYRE!

\* THE WIDOW WHO PREPARES TO END HER LIFE  
ON HER HUSBAND'S FUNERAL PYRE.

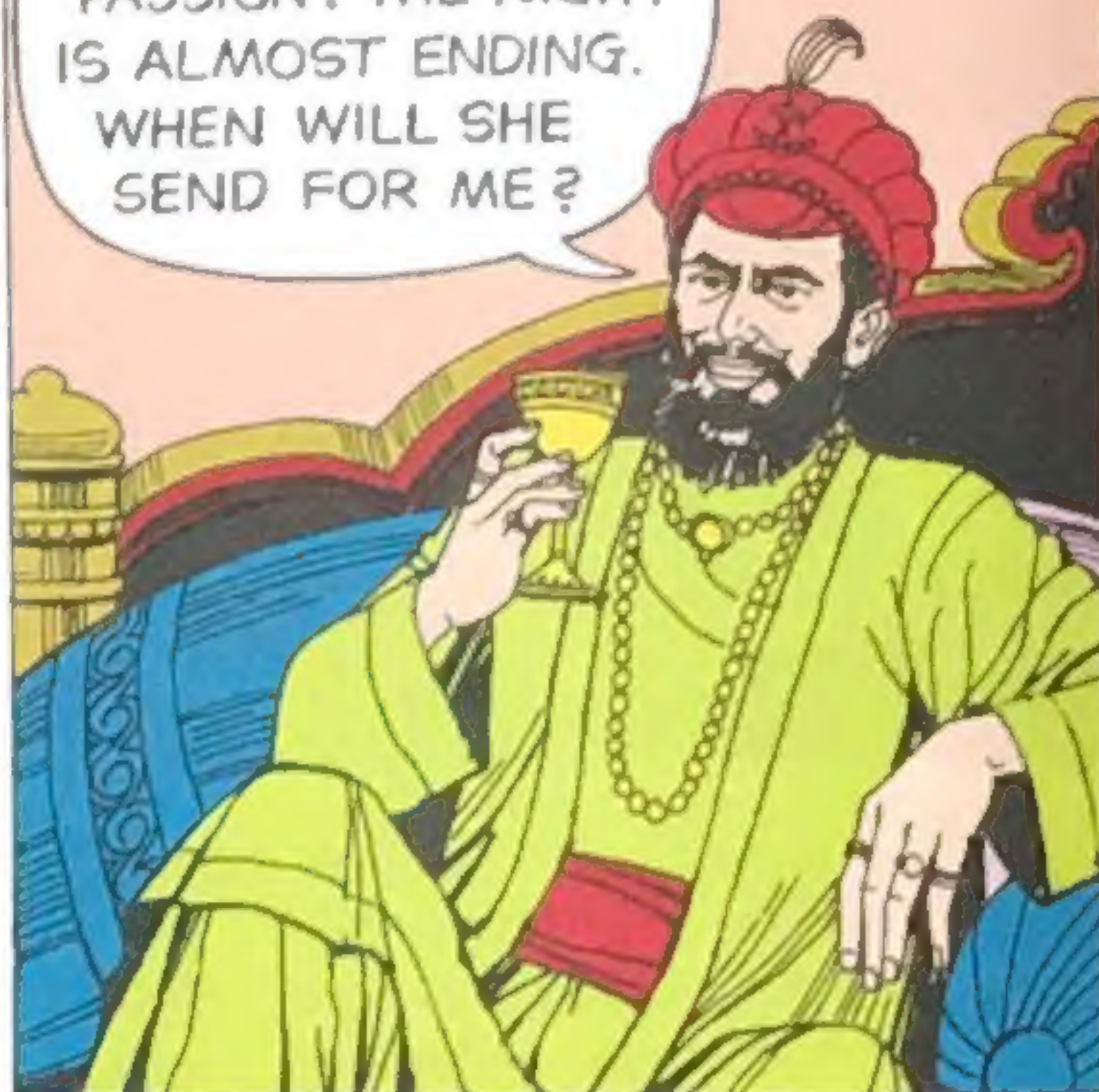


ADHAM KHAN IN HIS COURT, TIPSY WITH DRINK, FEASTED HIS EYES ON THE COURT DANCERS.



THE DANCE OVER, ADHAM KHAN'S THOUGHTS TURNED TO ROOPMATI.

I HEAR ROOPMATI SING, SUCH FEELING AND PASSION! THE NIGHT IS ALMOST ENDING. WHEN WILL SHE SEND FOR ME?



ROOPMATI PREPARED FOR THE NIGHT AND SUMMONED HER MAID.



I AM RETIRING TO MY CHAMBER. SUMMON ADHAM KHAN.

SHE ENTERED HER ROOM AND SWALLOWING A FATAL DOSE OF POWDERED DIAMOND...



... LAY DOWN PEACEFULLY ON THE ROYAL BED MADE READY FOR HER.



IN THE DANCE HALL -

THE PRINCESS BIDS YOU TO HER CHAMBER.

THIS IS THE MOMENT I WAS WAITING FOR!



HE STRUTTED IN EXHULTANTLY AND FOUND ROOPMATI ASLEEP, A LOOK OF GREAT SERENITY ON HER FACE.



OH! WHAT A CHARMING DOVE! A HOURI\* FROM THE HEAVENS!

ADHAM KHAN KNELT BESIDE HER, TOOK HER HAND IN HIS AND -



SHE IS DEAD! GUARDS...



A GUARD CAME RUNNING ALONG WITH A MAID.

ROOPMATI IS DEAD! SHE DIED FOR HER LOVER! PREPARE TO BURY HER BY THE SIDE OF BAZ BAHADUR.

ROOPMATI WAS BURIED BY THE SIDE OF BAZ BAHADUR IN THE TOMB THAT BAZ BAHADUR HAD EARLIER BUILT AT SARANGPUR AS THEIR LAST RESTING PLACE.

EVEN TODAY PEOPLE GO TO VISIT THE TOMB OF THESE LOVERS, AND IT IS SAID THAT IN THIS PLACE WHEN YOU CALL OUT THE NAME 'ROOPMATI' THE ECHO THAT ANSWERS IS 'BAZ BAHADUR'.

# WHICH OF THE ACKs HAVE YOU STILL NOT READ?

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Ganesha  
Ganesha And The Moon  
Ganga  
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Konark  
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Krishna And Jarasandha  
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Krishna And Rukmini  
Krishna And Shishupala  
Krishna And The False  
Vaasudeva  
Kubera  
Kumbhakarna  
Mahabharata  
Mahiravana  
Nachiketa  
Nahusha  
Nala Damayanti  
Parashurama  
Prabhavati  
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Rama  
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The Churning Of The  
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A Parrot's Body  
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Eknath  
Fa Hien  
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